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The Russian Orthodox Church of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands and Its Relation to Native American Traditions—

An Attempt at a
Multicultural Society,
1794–1912

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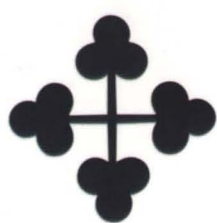
by Vyacheslav Ivanov

EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE



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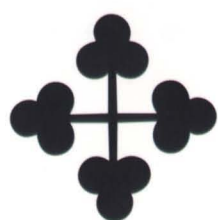
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The two hundredth anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church in Alaska was celebrated in September 1994. In connection with this event, the Library of Congress arranged an exhibition, *In the Beginning Was the Word: The Russian Church and Native Alaskan Cultures*. Some of the most important and interesting documents selected from the large archives of the Church preserved at the Library were shown at the exhibition. As curator of this exhibition, I would like to summarize the main results of the study of the archives. In this general account I shall stress their relevance for the problem of semiotic nets of communication in a multilingual and multicultural society.

The priests Innokentii Veniaminov (who became bishop of the whole area in 1840), Iakov Netsvetov, and other gifted representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church starting in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, translated important parts of the New Testament and other Christian texts from Church Slavonic (the sacred language of the Church) and Russian into several native languages of the area (two different Aleut dialects, two varieties of Alaskan Eskimo or Yupik, and Tlingit). The translations were partly published and used both at the church service and for school education, in which large groups of children speaking these languages were involved. It can be surmised that a very high percentage of the young Aleuts became literate. The degree of linguistic diversity in education by the end of the century was astonishing. Suffice it to say that at some parish schools four languages were studied: a native one, English, Russian, and Church Slavonic (at high school also Latin). The interaction of coexisting cultures may be seen at different semiotic levels. Thus a Christian image of St. John the Baptist was carved by a native Aleut craftsman in his traditional manner (1).

The oldest documents, written slightly before the Church was established as an autonomous institution (the Kodiak Vicariate was formed under the Irkutsk Diocese in 1794), have been preserved in the Yudin Collection of the Library of Congress. These include an order given in the name of Her Imperial Majesty Catherine II (1729–1796) (2), addressed to the Companion of the North-eastern American Company and bearing the date May 12, 1794, that instructs Shelikhov (1748–1795), chief of the company, how to organize the settlements, towns, and districts. Insofar as the Native Americans are concerned, the decree says, “we should treat them with as much tenderness and good will as possible” (3). Some difficulties with the “hairy” (Russian *mokhnatye*) Kurile natives (Ainu) are referred to in the document. At that time and until the late nineteenth century the Kurile Islands were included in the same area of both commercial and ecclesiastical Russian activity in the Northern Pacific region: the diocese was called the Church of Alaska, Aleutian and Kurile Islands, and priests such as Netsvetov who served in Russian Alaska had to visit the Kurile Islands several times. From the documents at the end



of the eighteenth century it may be deduced that the "Kuriles" (Ainu) were not friendly either to Russians or to Japanese who by that time had started their struggle with the latter over domination in the area. In the above-mentioned order it was suggested that it would be good to have trade connections with the Kurile natives and through them with Japan (on the history of the Kurile Islands at that period see: Tikhmenev 1979, pp. 36–37, 77–78, 173; Netsvetov 1980, p. 258; Shubin 1990 with references).

It seems reasonable to compare the data on the Kurile Islands found in the archives with the approximately contemporary Japanese sources. A well-known Japanese political thinker, Honda Toshiaki (1744–1821), who in 1798 stressed the importance of the northern areas for Japan (4), wrote about the difference between the Russian and Japanese official approaches to the natives: "Very few of the government authorities possess any real knowledge of astronomy or mathematics, and it is because of their ignorance that whenever there is talk of colonizing the northern territories, as occasionally happens, the project is never carried through. It is Japan's misfortune that her officials are misled by foolish tales about these great lands, which are allegedly far superior to Japan, and consequently they do not take advantage of great opportunities for profitable ventures. This is a matter of especial regret because there have been Russian officials in the islands inhabited by the Ainu since about 1765. They have displayed such diligence in their colonization efforts that eighteen or nineteen Kurile islands and the great land of Kamchatka have already been occupied. Forts are said to have been built at various places and a central administration established, the staff of which is regularly changed, and which rules the natives with benevolence. I have heard that the natives trust them as they would their own parents. In Japan, on the other hand, this system is as yet not followed. It is forbidden to teach Japanese to any natives. These are supplemented by a host of other prohibitions. It is a most lamentable system which has as its object keeping barbarians forever in their present condition. Since Russians operate under a system that provides that their own subjects are sent out to live among the natives, it is only to be expected that the Ainu look up to the Russian officials as gods and worship them" (5).

One of the oldest documents of the Church archives, written on June 29, 1794, shortly after the above-mentioned order had been issued, describes a discussion with an Ainu chief, called in local Russian *toen* (6), Mikhail Butian of the Kurile Islands. Alexei Chernov asked and received his permission to build the Assumption Church for the Kurile Islands (7).

The building of new churches was considered to be most important for the spread of Russian influence. A letter from Archimandrite Ioasaf (1766–1799), the leader of the Orthodox Spiritual Mission to America, to Shelikhov, written on May 18, 1795, after some information on successes in converting the



Alaskan natives, discusses the need to build at least a small church on Kodiak Island (8). In a copy of secret instructions of Rezanov (1764–1807), an influential government official and a founder of the Russian-American Company, to Baranov (1746–1819), the general manager of the colonies of the Russian-American Company (July 20, 1806), it is stated that Novo-Arkhangel'sk is to become the center of the Russian American colonies (9). The decree continues: "The church of St. Michael the Archangel must be built" (10). In 1808 a small chapel was erected on Unalaska. In July of 1824, near the end of the reign of Tsar Alexander I, Ivan Evseev Popov (Anginskii), later called Ioann (then Innokentii) Veniaminov (1797–1879), was appointed the first missionary priest to Unalaska. Being a man with a rare combination of energy and multivarious gifts (in a way calling to mind such secular heroes as Peter the Great), he contributed to the building of a new chapel, teaching native workmen carpentry and stone masonry. In August 1834 he was transferred to Sitka (Novo-Arkhangel'sk) where he served as a priest at the church of St. Michael the Archangel.

The years 1823–1836 spent by this unusual priest in Alaska are described in his diaries recently published in English (Veniaminov 1993) (11). They give a concise picture of the church services and his activities. For each month Veniaminov enumerates his permanent tasks such as assisting in building the church, studying Aleut words, and reading. To understand the extraordinary breadth of his interests one should note that several books by Voltaire are mentioned in the sections of the journal describing his everyday reading.

Translations into Native Languages and Linguistic Studies

In his Journal N10 (for March 1827) Veniaminov summarizes his treatise on the elements of the Christian faith (Veniaminov 1993, 173–174), written in Aleut and published in 1840 (Veniaminov 1840c). He used the Eastern Aleut dialect of Unalaska that he had studied since 1824 as the basis of the literary language which he created. At the time no written literature in the Aleut language existed. Veniaminov invented an alphabet based on the Russian Cyrillic one but adding some signs (partly rearranging those already existing in Old Russian Church Slavonic and Greek texts where they had been used for different purposes) to show the aspirated character of consonants, the placement of word accents, and different degrees of lengths of vowels. According to a modern scholar, "that was a remarkably good orthography, distinguishing nicely *k* from *q*, *g* from *r*, *gg* from *rr*, for example" (Krauss 1979, 39). In general the attempt proved successful, although in some aspects Veniaminov's Aleut spelling reproduced not only merits but also drawbacks of the Russian orthography of the period, the end of the word being marked by a so called "hard sign" or "yer" that had some historical justification in Russian but not



in Aleut (12). This writing was used by Veniaminov himself and by other priests and some Aleuts to compose translations (mostly from the Church Slavonic and Russian Bible, but also from prayers in Russian) and original texts in the two dialects of the Aleut language. With the help of an Aleut chief, Ivan Pan'kov (born about 1779—died before 1855) (13), Veniaminov created the first (yet not very exact) variant of their alphabet and wrote in it an Aleut catechism finished in 1826. It has remained a manuscript (14); it was not published because at that time the text of the Russian catechism was being changed by the Orthodox church (see Liapunova 1987a, p. 132; Krauss 1979, p. 39; 1990, p. 206). Meanwhile, Pan'kov and Veniaminov continued their work on Aleut orthography, improving it because of their better understanding of the sound system. The first Aleut book was Veniaminov's catechism printed in 1834. It began a book series published by Veniaminov in the Unalaska dialect of Aleut. The book was greeted and quoted by all those who were interested in the development of Alaskan studies: on April 13, 1834, the author of the detailed description of Russian America, K. T. Khlebnikov (1784–1838), wrote to another great explorer, F. P. Wrangell (1796–1870), at that time the chief manager of the Russian American colonies: "Today a catechism by Fr. Ioann has been brought from the printer; I sent a copy to Fedor Petrovich [Litke]" (15). A year later Litke (the Russianized form of the name of Luetke, 1797–1882, by then a tutor of a Grand Duke and future President of the Russian Academy of Sciences), another geographer and traveller who had discussed with Veniaminov his work on Aleut during his visit to the Aleutian Islands, rendered the contents of Veniaminov's linguistic supplement to his catechism "Notes on the Aleut language" in the first volume of his travel book (Luetke 1835, pp. 236–244). In his book on Russian America published five years later, Wrangell reproduced the phonetic introduction to Veniaminov's book (Wrangell 1839, pp. 255–259 = Wrangell 1980, pp. 140–144). Wrangell added several critical remarks about Veniaminov's use of such signs as Greek denotation of aspiration. Maybe this critique influenced Veniaminov; also this edition of Veniaminov's catechism was full of misprints. Possibly at least some copies were destroyed by Veniaminov himself; no copies of the edition could be located, although the contents of the supplement may be reconstructed through their rendering into French and German by Luetke and Wrangell, respectively (cf. Krauss 1985, p. 10; 1990).

The Western Aleut dialect of Atka differed from that of Unalaska or Fox (Lisiev) and had been put into written usage by another brilliant priest, Iakov Netsvetov (16), who knew both Russian and Aleut from childhood, being a Creole, who had been educated at the Irkutsk Theological Seminary (*kreol* was the official Russian term for a child of an Aleut or Eskimo or other native woman and a Russian male in the first generation; *kreolka* was a gender form for a Creole woman; for the next generation terms like a "Creole's son" (*kreol'skii syn*) were used). His broad interests are reflected in the lists of books he bought for his private library that can be



partly reconstructed on the basis of the archive documents. Only one of his own books has been preserved there, but some data on his books exist (17). After waiting for two years for the church to be built and to be ordained as priest (18), Netsvetov started his work at Atka in March–April 1828 (19). Like some other bilingual Creoles he helped to establish a literary Aleut language mainly through translation of parts of the Bible. He was trying to broaden the dialectal base of the Aleut written language. Netsvetov supplied the Atka dialect forms for the next editions of Veniaminov's works: the main text by Veniaminov was printed in the Unalaska (Fox or Lisiev) dialect, but most of the Atka forms different from those of Unalaska were given in the footnotes by Netsvetov. Thus the same book could be used for the church service and for educational purposes in the two different dialect areas where the Eastern Fox and the Western Atka dialects of Aleut were spoken.

In his preface to Veniaminov's *Elements of the Christian Faith*, written both in the Western Aleut Atka dialect and in Russian, Netsvetov describes his reasons for supplying Veniaminov's Eastern Aleut Fox dialect translations with the Atka equivalents. This text is of exceptional value for the history of linguistic studies: a native speaker who was the first to write in his own dialect uses it for metalinguistic purposes describing the relation between the two dialects and the advantages of creating a unified written language. His discovery of phonetic and morphological correspondences between the forms of the two dialects is particularly interesting. Netsvetov says: "But you, my brothers, until recent times were like your brothers the Easterners [i.e., the speakers of the Eastern Aleut dialect of Unalaska]: you did not have letters, neither writing nor reading for your tongue, so it was possible for you to learn the word of the God only by hearing. But it was a grief for us that hearing [the word of the God] was not easy for those of you who were living in distant places. For you it was necessary to have the Christian teachings in your own tongue so that you could teach yourself and also make your brothers learn all the time and everywhere. Having thought about all this the very reverend priest Ioann Veniaminov who had come to Unalaska had begun this important work for them (the Easterners) and he first translated into their speech the Catechism and the elements of the Christian teaching. Before I received his translation I had been working at a difficult task of translating the Catechism into your tongue. But on receiving his translation I changed my mind for the following reason. As the first edition of the above mentioned priest Ioann's translation of the Catechism was spoiled by a lot of misprints he undertook a second edition. I seized this occasion in helping him and supplementing his translation that he had tried to improve in the second edition with the explanations of those words of your tongue that differ from those of the Easterners. I made footnotes to which numbers were assigned so that it should be easy to find a corresponding form on each page. But I also have found that there are some regular differences in the endings [of the words of the two dialects] that do



not make any trouble in reading [since the correspondences are regular]. In most cases the forms that end with *n* in the language of the Easterners end with *s* in your tongue, and those ending in *k* or *q* in their language end with *G* or *R* in your tongue. So I did not find it necessary to note such differences below. For instance, if in the language of the Easterners it is said : *wa'kun ma'lik aRta'kuq* (he has done these things), you will say: *wa'kus ma'liX aRta'kuR*, and that will not make any difference for the understanding. I have done this for one particular reason: a separate translation [of the holy texts] for the Easterners and for you would have separated what really should not have been separated. Not now [but in the future] the way you will read the same text in one tongue and using one [system of] writing would help to create a unified language for you. Now your speeches are different, but they will be unified. You are now like brothers through your common origin, but I say that you may become the brothers through the teaching of the Gospel, through the mind [the Spirit]" (see also a literal word-for-word English translation: Bergsland 1959, pp. 85–86).

This text, written by Netsvetov on November 15, 1837, is significant in many respects. First of all, it gives a very clear picture of the relation between the Aleut dialects. But this purely scholarly conclusion is used by the young priest in his (perhaps partly utopian) project of a unified Aleut literary language. The way to achieve it seems quite practical: the use of the footnotes giving the Atkan dialectal forms corresponding to the Eastern dialectal words in the main text seems to achieve the necessary purposes of the church service and home reading. Netsvetov tried to write in a sort of unified language, giving some preference to the Atkan dialect and supplementing his own text with footnotes adding the Eastern forms (in this way he showed that the dialects with respect to the literary language were interchangeable: in his writings the Western dialect plays a role similar to that of the Eastern one in Veniaminov's publications). One can only be amazed by Netsvetov's success in expressing highly abstract linguistic and religious ideas in this dialect. In the quoted passage of his preface to Veniaminov's *Elements of the Christian Faith* only a few Christian terms are borrowed and used with the Aleut endings: *Xjistia'-nam* "Christian" (with the regular substitution of the Western Aleut *j* for the Church Slavonic and Russian *r* followed later by Netsvetov's former students in their translations), *katiXi:'sisaq* "catechism," *yeva'ngiliyam* "the Gospel" (in this case Netsvetov would not follow Veniaminov's suggestion that the term be translated by the Aleut *tunu's'acxisaq* from *tunus'aq* "message, saying, rumour" + (*mac-* or *maqac-*)*xis**aq* "good," Veniaminov 1846, dictionary, 59: Veniaminov clearly wanted to render the inner form of the Greek term changing the order of elements). Besides using the astonishing lexical resources of the Aleut language that had such old terms as Western *allurra-*, Eastern *alluRa-* "write" (20), Netsvetov tried to develop new meanings as in the verbs for "to print" (from the original meaning "to mount"), "to translate" (from



"to produce"), etc. In any case he succeeded in writing a very complicated text rendering the same ideas as those put forward in the Russian variant of his preface. A human touch was given to the whole text by mentioning numerous mistakes that distorted the original edition of Veniaminov's book.

The Aleut primer compiled by Veniaminov with the help of Netsvetov was particularly important for the spread of literacy among the Aleuts ([Veniaminov and Netsvetov] 1846) (21). In 1835 after Veniaminov finished his Aleut translation of the Gospel of Matthew he asked the native Fox dialect speakers through the Consistory to proofread copies of the work to improve the style and to help him correct possible mistakes. In a letter to the Rev. Grigorii Golovin of Unalaska, Veniaminov asks him to have the Aleuts read the manuscript of the Gospel of St. Matthew in Aleut for appropriate diction and comprehension. Veniaminov asked Golovin to make any changes suggested by the natives (22). Netsvetov also assisted him in this endeavor, adding the Atka dialect equivalents to his translations (Veniaminov 1840b). He also supplied Veniaminov with three examples of Atka folklore: a song, a short narrative, and a folktale. They are published in Veniaminov's "Notes about the Islands of the Unalaska district" (Veniaminov 1840d, 3, pp. 20–26; 1984, pp. 373–379; also reprinted in a scholarly transcription with an English translation in: Bergsland 1959, pp. 56–58; Jochelson 1990, pp. 705–713).

Having written his Christian faith statement in Aleut, published his Aleut primer, and translated some prayers and Bible texts into the Fox dialect, Veniaminov went on with his studies of the Aleut language, compiling its first grammar and an Aleut-Russian dictionary published in one volume in 1846 (Veniaminov 1846, see also an English rendering: Geoghegan/[Veniaminov] 1944). His linguistic capacities are remarkable. In the spirit of the Romantic scholarship of the period, Veniaminov in his general introduction suggests that some features of the Aleut language might be used to recover its past and the ancient culture of the tribe. He gives examples of Aleut folk songs (cf. their last scholarly republication: Jochelson 1990, pp. 679–703) and of more archaic words different from modern usage. Veniaminov was the first to pay attention to the relics of the oldest Aleut culture that might have been preserved in the language itself. He noticed, for instance, the old names for the sea (Old Aleut *inyudaq* "that which is bent or flexible," from the rare verb *inyukuqing* "I am bent, I bow") and the sky (Old Aleut *k'quyudaq*, from the verb *quyukuqing* "I lie down to rest," Veniaminov 1846, p.xi; cf. also typologically similar Lithuanian *dangus* "sky," Proto-Slavic **ra(j)-doNga* "rainbow," from the Balto-Slavic root of Lithuanian *dengti* "to bend;" it may be supposed that in the same way Aleut *agadak* "sun" was originally connected to the stem of the verb *aRakuqing* "I become visible, I am appearing," Veniaminov 1846, Dictionary, p. 1; for typologically similar verbal nominalizations in the function of a name of the sun, cf. also Tlingit *Ga-gan* "sun = sun-burning," Pinnow 1966, p. 147, and in the Amazonian area Amuesha



ye-co'y-o?t-amp-e'n-e? "sun = that which gives light to us," Derbyshire and Pullum 1986; Ivanov 1988, p. 124). From these examples as well as from other data collected by Veniaminov and other priests studying the language it can be seen that Old Aleut, as many native languages of America, tended to use verbal forms instead of the nominal ones that would have seemed more natural from the average European point of view. In his grammar Veniaminov showed that the boundary between the noun and the verb in Aleut was far from clear: nouns seemed to be used as verbs. In a way, Veniaminov and his collaborators might be considered predecessors of such American linguists as Benjamin L. Whorf, who suggested that the verbal categories of the Native American languages and the whole picture of the world connected to them were quite different from those of the average European tradition (Whorf 1956; especially on the unusual relation between nouns and verbs see: for Eskimo closely related to Aleut: Hammerich 1936; Mey 1970; Walter 1981, for the other languages of the New World: Swadesh 1939; Kuipers 1967 and 1968; Chafe 1976, pp. 64–65, 78–80; Dietrich 1977; Broschart 1987; Hopper and Thompson 1985; Derbyshire and Pullum 1986; Ivanov 1988; Jelinek and Escalante 1988; Henry 1988; Sasse 1993). European science has been based on the assumption that the world can be described in terms of the notions designated by nouns (like atoms, molecules, particles, quarks, strings, and superstrings). Many cultures of the New World preferred, and are still expressing, a more dynamic view of the universe, stressing the role of verbs and sometimes using deverbal nominalizations instead of nouns as in the Old Aleut words studied by Veniaminov. He was among the first to discover this aspect of what might be called the metaphysics of language.

Veniaminov worked not only as a linguist but as an anthropologist, as seen in his description of the Unalaska Islands (Veniaminov 1840d; 1984; see Stepanova 1947; Okladnikov 1976; 1983; Liapunova 1975; Arsen'ev 1979; Kan 1990). He was interested in finding some traces of the old spiritual culture of the ancestors of the modern Aleuts reflected in the meanings of some words of the language (23). He studied old words with religious connotations (*aguRuq* "God, creator," *angiq* "spirit," etc.). To him they were important for possible linguistic reconstruction of the older spiritual culture of the Aleuts in prehistoric times. But it should be stressed that, due to his knowledge of this old vocabulary, Veniaminov succeeded in translating religious texts in a way that seemed quite natural to the Aleuts. He was also interested in the first terms introduced with Christianity after 1795. He mentioned for instance *AguRum angali* "the Kingdom of Heaven" = "the light and the day of the God" (cf. *angaliRadigak* "saint" = "bright"); *kamgam tukku* "the priest" = "the chief of the feast or of the prayer"; the different words for "dying, death" in relation to the Christians (*tanadaqadalik* "has ceased to be a guest" = "ceased to live on the earth, has gone back to his place") or nonbaptized people: *asx-alik* "has been lost," referring to all living beings (24); *qal'agan al'an axsxa* "is



buried" = "has been put to his own natural place," *adam al'Puxtasqangin* "Holy scripture" = "fatherly (paternal) writings;" *qankunyaq* "Trinity" = "existing thrice (three times);" *aguRukuRunaq* "the Blessed Virgin" = "the one who has given birth to God," Veniaminov 1846, p. iv-v. Investigating the value of such particles as *sig* "completely, really, altogether," *ta* "many times, not at once," *sigas'ada* "very strongly," *tas'ada* "extraordinary way of doing something," Veniaminov comes to the conclusion that the verbal form *kamgasigatas'adalik* "he used to pray quite intensely with the utmost care in a perfect and sincere way, many times and very strongly" may be used only while talking of God the Man, as in the Gospel of St. Luke, XXI, 44 (Veniaminov 1846, pp.viii, 65, n. 57). To give an example of a modern Aleut Christian text, Veniaminov quoted a short piece by an Aleut Kurbatov written in 1829 (*ibid.*, pp. 85-86) and proudly mentioned his own Aleut book on Christianity (*ibid.*, p. x, note; see Veniaminov 1840).

Veniaminov also studied the origin of taboo connected to some names. He noted the existence of several specific anatomic terms due to ancient studies of medicine (*ibid.*, p. v.); his suggestions are proved by modern research (Marsh and Laughlin 1956). Some of Veniaminov's remarks on the structure of the language are quite informative; particularly instructive are his tables of the verbal (positive and negative) forms and remarks explaining their use. He really laid the foundation for later studies by scholars such as Jochelson, Meshchaninov, and Bergsland, who appreciated his contribution (Jochelson 1919; Bergsland 1959). Veniaminov, who tried to preserve the beauty of the language in his Aleut compositions (Veniaminov 1846, p. x, note), had the merit of preserving the complex syntactic structure of Modern Aleut that makes it exceptional among the newly developed languages as discussed recently by Bergsland. Veniaminov himself was far from being uncritical of the language he had mastered. He saw as one of its main drawbacks the impossibility of forming nominalizations of the type of Russian nouns in *-nie* (corresponding approximately to the English ones in *-ation*): in such cases only verbal (and not nominal) constructions are possible in the Aleut language (Veniaminov 1846, p. x). Veniaminov also paid attention to the absence of some notions as "to suffer" = "to bear" or "forgiving an offence" in the semantic structure of Aleut depending on the peculiarities of social ideas connected to these words and their combinations (*ibid.*, p. v). In some such cases as well as in his general remarks on the Aleuts, Veniaminov seems to be overcritical, reminding one of Schweitzer's comments about his African patients.

The linguistic achievements of Netsvetov, who continued his studies of both Eastern and Western Aleut (25), were no less spectacular than those of Veniaminov. His most important Russian-Aleut dialectal Fox (Eastern) dictionary (he worked on it in 1835-1843) will be published by the Library of Congress in 1997, with an introduction and glossary by this author. It includes a standard dictionary



giving about 6,000 words in alphabetic order and 26 sections where key words are arranged according to different semantic groups or fields, such as God and religion, the Church, holidays and feasts, the sky and celestial bodies and events, the earth and the world in general, animals, fishes and birds (Netsvetov specifies that only those creatures that are known to Aleuts are included), the partition of the earth (social and geographical parts of it), plants, metals, minerals and clays, the structure of time, notions relating to human beings (including mind, emotions, parts of the body), social ranks and professions, names of places and islands, peoples, dress, food and drink, trade, household, education, illness, war, industry, navigation, the four cardinal points, winds or compass points (in this part abbreviations like NNW are used as metalinguistic terms), specific local words relating to separate islands, and terms concerning different types of Aleutian boats. In this thematic part of the dictionary there are only representatives of a certain word group; to find the rest one should consult the main (alphabetically ordered) part of the manuscript. Netsvetov included not only original Aleut words, but also Russian borrowings. His thematic dictionary section on education may be given as an example. He includes in it such words as "learning" (*aci'gaq*; in Veniaminov's dictionary another derivative from the same verbal stem -*'acigaaq-u'qing*- the noun *acigasi'ngin* is given in the same meaning (Veniaminov 1846a, Dictionary, p. 24); other derivations from the root are comparable in both the dictionaries), "alphabet" (*a'smukaq*, evidently from the Russian *azbuka* with the phonemic change of -*zbu*- to -*smu*-; the word is missing in Veniaminov's dictionary, but it and its variants were later used in titles of Aleut and Eskimo primers of the century), "book" (*alu'gis* is derived from the root of the verb "to write" given in the list later, examples of the use of the words may be found in Netsvetov's text translated above; Veniaminov gives *aRi'dguq* in the same meaning: *ibid.*, p. 3), "to read" (*ilaXta*; in Veniaminov's dictionary it is replaced by the word for "counting"), "paper" (*gumagaq*, evidently from the Russian *bumaga* with the change of *bu*- to *gu*-; Veniaminov gives *kalikaq* "paper, letter, package", *ibid.*, p. 36), "heap of paper" (*guma'gam taxsa'*), "quire" (*guma'gam suXsi'*), "sheet of paper" (*guma'gam siRi*), "pen" (*a'kax*, *aluRa'siq*; the words coincide with those in Veniaminov's dictionary), "ink" (*aluRisik*; the word is missing in Veniaminov's dictionary as also the others that follow: possibly Netsvetov was reproducing his teacher's experience of communicating with students at the church school), "ink-pot" (*aluRasidgusiq*), "penknife" (*ukinakucam a'kama'n cutxulana*), "the process of writing" (*a'luX*, Veniaminov gives meanings "writing, line, letter" to these derivatives of the verb "to read", *ibid.*, p. 10), "writing" (*a'l'uq*), "papers or notes" (Russian *zapiski*, Aleut *aluqicaq* from the same verbal root "to write" as the previous items in the dictionary), "seal" (*ana'tiq*, the same meaning is given in Veniaminov's dictionary after the meanings "sign, mark"), "sealing-wax" (*a'skux*; the word is missing in Veniaminov's dictionary); "pencil" (*kalindasaq*, clearly borrowed from the Russian *karandash*), "compasses, dividers" (*imuyusiq*), "ruler, line" (*tuRmigaluuq*), "page" (*siRlim a'kan*

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ada'), "line" (i:xsX'iX), "blackboard" (*quga'nam alayaRana'*), "slate-pencil" (*quga'-nam aluxa'ca*), etc. (26). This list of names of objects may help reconstruct the everyday school life of the period. It is not clear to what extent Veniaminov might have used Netsvetov's text, finished several years before the former's dictionary was published. The approach of the two men to the new names for the objects introduced by civilization was different.

Several priests continued their work on Aleut translations of the gospels in the second half of the nineteenth century. Most productive was the Creole priest Innokentii Shaiashnikov (1823–1883), who translated the gospels of Luke, John, Matthew, and Mark into the Eastern dialect, finishing his work around 1872 (27); from his translations, the gospels of Luke (Tikhon 1903) and of John (Tikhon 1902) were published posthumously almost thirty years later. He also translated the Acts of the Apostles (they were also published much later: Shaiashnikov 1902). He compiled a primer, a prayer book (some portions of it are bilingual; cf. also later Fr. Andrei Lodochnikov's translation: *Prayers and Songs of the Orthodox Church in the Aleut Dialect* 1898) and a catechism in Aleut; manuscript copies of all these texts are preserved in the archive (28). In some of them one may find changes and short remarks (such as red-penned Russian *konets* "end" on one of the pages) showing how the text was used in the service. His sermon was also published in 1902. Especially interesting was his work on songs. As he knew old church melodies very well he tried to integrate them into a new liturgy. His *Short Guide to the Devout Life* was also published in Aleut posthumously (Pierce 1990, p. 451).

It is interesting to see how exotic terms designating unusual things were introduced into his translations. For instance, as a name for "camel" the Church Slavonic and Russian term *virbl'ud-* (with the vowel *i* showing the colloquial way to pronounce it) was used with the Aleut case ending *-am* (Aleut *virbl'u-dam*), but in a footnote the Aleut explanation *algaam qungaRi* "a humpback animal" is given (29). In the same text of the Gospel of Mark the Church Slavonic name for "locusts" *akrid-* with the Aleut plural sign *-in-* is introduced. In the Gospel of St. Matthew as translated by Shaiashnikov, the Russian or Slavonic terms for some exotic plants like "vine" (*vinograd*) and "fig tree" (*smokva*) were borrowed.

Translations into the Atka dialect begun by Netsvetov in his early years were continued mainly by the priest Lavrentii Salamatov (born about 1818, died in 1864), who attended the Atka school and as a young boy in 1834 was appointed a song leader for the Atka church. He was ordained priest in 1843, served at Atka in 1844–1864, and also taught at the Novo-Arkhangel'sk Seminary in 1849–1850. Continuing the work of Netsvetov who translated the Gospel of Matthew into the Atka dialect, he rendered the gospels of Mark, Luke, and John into it (30); the work was finished by 1861. In his clearly written manuscripts, his trans-



lations are accompanied by the Russian (not Church Slavonic) originals. He also compiled a shortened catechism (31), the manuscript of which is bilingual Russian-Aleut. His primer, including some rewritten pages of the "Elements" by Veniaminov, a translation of the textbook *Short Directions for a Happy Life*, and some prayers (one of them being for Tsar Alexander II) is an unfinished draft. All these works remained unpublished in his time. His translation of the Gospel according to St. Mark was published in scholarly transliteration by Bergsland (Bergsland 1959, pp. 87–104, see also short fragments from Salamatov's other works, *ibid.*, p. 87). According to Bergsland's opinion, "his Aleut seems more idiomatic and less fettered by the Russian text than that of his predecessors and some places suggest that he might have consulted the Greek original" (Bergsland 1959, p. 7; grammatical analysis of some parts of Salamatov's translation of Mark's Gospel is given in: Golovko 1989, p. 56, fn. 5, 58, 62–63); in any case the Russian original accompanying his translation renders some Greek names which are translated into Aleut: for instance, in two places it is repeated that St. Thomas' Greek name should be translated "the Twin" (that is given both in Russian and in Aleut). To see how Salamatov succeeded in the most difficult parts of his translations one might quote the opening lines of the Gospel of John: *Ami'sim i'lan T'unur a'nar. a'salix Tunur AguRum i'l a'nar, agalix AguRur Tunur a'nax*: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (*Ioannam ilagan tunuzacxi'Zam snganangis, ka'mgir I, 1*).

There are a few cases in which Salamatov used a borrowed Russian term but gave an Aleut equivalent in a footnote: thus a Russian loanword *obrezanie* "circumcision" is explained by the Aleut *qiga'gzar* (*ibid.*, *ka'mgir vii, 22*), a Russian borrowing *pritcha* (from *pritcha*) "parable" is explained by the Aleut *angadaliimara'sir* (*ibid.*, x, 6). In some cases Salamatov did not follow Veniaminov's attempt to create an original Aleut expression: for instance, instead of the sentence *ukud'i'gaq 'agaku'qing* "I am blessing" (Veniaminov 1846, dictionary, p. 62), Salamatov uses the Russian stem with the Aleut endings: *blagosloveri'kur* "let (him/it) be blessed" (*Ma'jkam ila'gan tunuzacxi'Zam sngana'dangis ka'mgir xi, 9, 10*), *blagoslovilig* "he blessed" (*ibid.*, *ka'mgir xiv, 22*); *blagosloviqa'ngis* "he did bless them" (*Lukam ilaga'n tunuzacxi'Zam sngana'dangis, kamgir xxiv, 49*), *blagosloviku'm* "while he was blessing" (*ibid.*, 50), *blagosloveg'i* and *blagoslovegir* are also used in Salamatov's prayers included in his primer; the results seem (particularly in such a case as *blagoslovi-l-ig* with a mixture of endings of the two systems) close to the combinations of the Aleut and Russian verbal stems and endings (but with different distribution of the elements of the two languages) that are characteristic of the Creolized speech still being used by the Western Aleuts on the Mednyi Island where verbal endings are Russian (Menovshchikov 1965; Vakhtin and Golovko 1987; the origin of this type of speech was discovered by Veniaminov who, describing the degree of Russian influence on Aleut, noticed "that almost all young Aleuts not only do not



use but cannot, without difficulty, even understand many terminal modifications [inflections] of verbs," Veniaminov 1984, p. 297). But the number of such Creolized forms is very small in the whole of Salamatov's works.

After finishing his Aleut translations and his grammar of the Unalaska Aleut, Veniaminov studied the Tlingit (Kolosh) language (32), which belonged to another group of native American languages (Na-Dene according to the standard classification, Sapir 1915; Pinnow 1966, that has become controversial; Tlingit-Eyak-Athabaskan according to Krauss: Krauss 1973; 1979; 1979a; 1980; Krauss and Leer 1981). Important ideas on the differences between Northern American languages are expressed in his general description of Alaska (Veniaminov 1840; 1984, pp. 438–451) as well as in his later book on Tlingit and Eskimo (Veniaminov 1846a). The latter gives a short grammatical sketch and a vocabulary of the American Indian Tlingit language that was the main source for scholars until the end of the century: (de la Grasserie 1902) and a concise enumeration of the correspondences between the Aleut and Eskimo languages. Veniaminov, as before him Rask (Thalbitzer 1916), was among the first to establish relations between these languages that were confirmed by later scholarship (see particularly: Bergsland 1958; 1986; 1989; Bergsland and Vogt 1967). Veniaminov underestimated the number of lexical items common to Eskimo and Aleut, but he rightly pointed out the identity of structure of both branches of what is called now Eskaleut. His general view of the possible homeland of the speakers of these languages before they came to North America (Veniaminov 1984, p. 60) seems quite reasonable and compatible with the results of modern studies. In the introduction to his book on Tlingit and Eskimo, Veniaminov discusses the relations between six languages of the part of North America that belonged to Russia: Unalaskan (Aleut), Kodiak (Eskimo; he gave a general description of its six main dialects spread in Alaska), Kenai (by this term he meant Tanaina and some other North Athabaskan languages: Kolchan, Ahtna, Koyukon, Ingalik-Kutchin), Iakutat (he distinguished already between Iakutat and closely related Ugalien=Eyak), Kaigan (Haida in modern terminology). He enumerates grammatical features that show typological differences between the Eskimo-Aleut group (called Unalaskan in his treatise as the Aleut dialect of Unalaska was a main representative of the group for him) and the other one ("Kolosh" in his terms) to which some American Indian languages of Alaska belong. In his classification Tlingit, North-Athabaskan languages, and Haida are fused together which makes him a predecessor of Sapir's Na-Dene hypothesis (the relation of Haida to the Tlingit-Eyak-Athabaskan group remains controversial). Unlike such of his contemporaries as Wrangell who also wrote about the links between Athabaskan, Eyak, and Tlingit using (as many modern linguists do) only lexical comparisons (33), Veniaminov based his classification on typological differences in grammar (being in this a forerunner of modern scholars like Polivanov and Trubetzkoy, cf. Ivanov 1988, pp.



128–129). He pointed out four typological features characterizing Eskimo-Aleut that are absent in the languages that were later called Na-Dene: the existence of the dual (the importance of this feature was studied approximately at the same time by Wilhelm Humboldt (Humboldt 1985), the opposition of possessive and indefinite cases, the final verbal endings as opposed to grammatical prefixes or infixes prevalent in American Indian (this feature remained important in Sapir's scheme of morphological typology built almost a century later), the inflexion of adverbs having special forms of the plural (cf. on the typology of this feature: Trypucko 1952, especially pp. 3–16, 127–139). According to modern views, these structural differences are relevant. Particularly revealing are Veniaminov's remarks on the typology of numerals: he has shown that in the Eskimo-Aleut group they partly resemble the American Indian structure, but only in some (Eskimo Kodiak) parts of the family. But this very example shows that typology is not necessarily connected to genealogical classification.

From the point of view of the history of linguistics I cannot but be amazed at the intuition of Veniaminov in his grammatical studies. While discussing Tlingit verbal forms he remarks that "the absence of the letters [marks] of the first and second persons is the sign of the third person" (*"otsutstvie bukv pervogo i vtorogo litsa est' znak tret'ego litsa,"* Veniaminov 1846a, p. 13). Although modern scholars would have preferred talking about sound elements (phonemes) and not letters even in the case of a written language, still—with this difference in mind—the coincidence of Veniaminov's concise formula and those of such classics of structural linguistics as Emile Benveniste (in his studies of the typology of the verbal endings of different persons) seems remarkable. Veniaminov's phonetic notation of forms with the archaic Tlingit nasalization remains among the rare sources for the historical phonology of the language (see on Veniaminov's forms like *taum* "feather," *tauaq* "goose," *t'an* "hot springs": Krauss and Leer 1981, p. 147, where both the exactness of Veniaminov's data and the difficulty of understanding his peculiar phonetic signs are emphasized). It is also supposed by modern scholars on the basis of Veniaminov's remarks that he "heard glottalization, labialization, and velar-uvular contrast, but could not figure out how to write them" (Veniaminov 1984, p. 444, fn.).

Veniaminov insisted on having priests who knew the native languages (34). Having become bishop of the diocese he succeeded in shaping a network of translators and priests who helped to create a substantial Christian literature in the native languages of Alaska.

To his brief sketch of the Alutiiq language Veniaminov appended a translation of the first chapter of the Gospel of John made by Grigorii Terent'ev (1788 to some time after 1846; according to Wrangell's decree starting with March 13, 1833 this gifted company employee had to be considered a "human



being" and not a Creole, Pierce 1990, pp. 504–505). The first sentence read: *Aularn'utmi' lngu'q N'uq, N'uq tauna' lnguk Agajutmi, Aga'jun chal'i' lngun' n'ugu-luni* "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with the God, and the Word was God" (Veniaminov 1846b, p. 36).

Il'ia Tyzhnov was invited to do for the Alutiiq (Pacific Yupik or "Kodiak-Aleut" in the Russian terminology of the period) variety of Alaskan Eskimo what Veniaminov himself did for the Atka dialect of Aleut. Tyzhnov was born in 1823, educated in the Irkutsk (Eastern Siberia) Seminary, came to North America in 1841, as a song leader in the church of Kodiak, with the intent of studying the Eskimo Pacific Yupik or Alutiiq (Kodiak-Aleut) language while in the position of a deacon. In 1845 he was appointed inspector of the Novo-Arkhangelsk (Sitka) Seminary and a teacher. While in America in 1841–1846 Tyzhnov translated prayers, the catechism (Tyzhnov 1848a), and the Gospel of Matthew into the Eskimo Alutiiq language (Tyzhnov 1848b) and compiled a primer in that dialect (Tyzhnov 1848). He also worked on a grammar of the Alutiiq language and on its vocabulary. Several native Eskimos, particularly Gerasim Zyrianov and Vladimir Uchilishchev, assisted him correcting and improving these texts. In a report written to Bishop Innokentii on January 22, 1846, Tyzhnov describes how, on the order of the Bishop, he read to the natives from his Eskimo grammar and dictionary in order to test their comprehension. The Eskimos noted that they understood words and not their meanings; perhaps the merits of Tyzhnov's orthography were much more evident than his dubious successes in translation. Tyzhnov stressed his grave responsibility to convey to them a clear and complete understanding of "the Word of the God" so that he would not "condemn their souls" with misleading translations (35). In 1846 Tyzhnov went to St. Petersburg to continue his education at the Ecclesiastical Academy.

Modern specialists in Alaskan Eskimo languages refer favorably to the phonetic side of his work. According to Leer, his was a "phonologically very informative orthography" (Leer 1985, p. 85, cf. Leer 1985a, p. 138, n. 5; Krauss 1985, p. 12), although it was not quite consistent from the morphological point of view and in some cases (as in not rendering lenis *p* as *b*) he was influenced by Veniaminov's Aleut spelling (Leer 1985, p. 85, n. 5). Later Konstantin A. Larionov who had spent eighteen years among the Pacific Yupik people working for the Russian-American Company, severely criticized Tyzhnov's translations while trying to translate the Bible into the Alutiiq or Pacific Yupik Eskimo language. Larionov's notes on the Kodiak-Aleut (Eskimo) language are preserved in the archives. Among other problems he discusses the weaknesses of previous translations by Il'ia Tyzhnov (36). Larionov suggests that Tyzhnov did not have sufficient knowledge of the Alutiiq language and could not render the sense of the whole text as his assistants helped him giving only meanings of separate words. He also criticizes Tyzhnov for not using such necessary letters as *b* (see above) and *v* and for an exaggerated use of dia-



critical signs not understandable to natives (again in this Tyzhnov might have been influenced by Veniaminov's suggestions concerning the spelling not only of Aleut, but of other languages such as Tlingit: Veniaminov tried to minimize the number of letters as modern phonologists like Iakovlev did in their work on alphabets based on phonemic principles: in that case diacritic signs mark the phonemically relevant features distinguishing phonemes that can be written by one over-all symbol). Showing semantic mistakes and ambiguities in Tyzhnov's translations, Larionov himself tried to use his knowledge of the Eskimo traditions (such as veneration of the Cross known since pre-Christian times) and terminology (rendering of the word for "communion" as literally "blood-drinking"). His bilingual primer and prayer book in Alutiiq and Russian includes a list of syllables, daily prayers in Alutiiq and Russian, admonitions, and a brief notation on the days of the week, giving their names and traditional astronomical symbols (37).

Being appointed as a priest in the Yukon area (see his diaries: Netsvetov 1984) Netsvetov studied the Central Alaskan Yupik (or Yukon-Kuskoswim in the terminology of the time) language and made translations into it (on a manuscript of his translation written ca. 1860 by another person see: Krauss 1985, p. 12). Among people trained by Netsvetov at the mission was Zakhar'ii Bel'kov (born ca. 1838–1899), son of a Creole master carpenter and a church builder who later became a priest himself (38). Bel'kov worked on the Yukon-Kuskokwim (Central Alaskan Yupik) Eskimo language and helped Netsvetov in his studies of it. Bel'kov was conscious that translations of the texts of the Bible were made by him and some other priests from the Church Slavonic language, which is different from Russian. Some of the manuscripts of his translations of prayers and excerpts from the Bible are bilingual, being written both in Church Slavonic and in the Yukon-Kuskokwim (Central Alaskan Yupik) language. In the 1880s and 1890s he began compiling a trilingual Yukon-Kuskokwim/Russian/Church Slavonic dictionary. He either did not finish it or did not preserve it in the church archives. In any case only fragments of the initial part of the dictionary are present in the archive (39). In many lines there are corrections showing that we have only a provisional draft of the work. Bel'kov shows good linguistic intuition in distinguishing between Russian and Church Slavonic forms, although there are some mistakes in Russian words, especially in gender agreement; sometimes a notation of colloquial or dialectal pronunciation is given as a Russian form, as in the line for "who": Central Alaskan Yupik *ki*"na, Church Slavonic *kto*, Russian *khto* (with a non-literary pronunciation of the initial consonant combination *kt*-). The dictionary seems valuable for the reconstruction of the sociolinguistic situation in multilingual Alaskan Eskimo communities.

Bel'kov also translated some prayers and church songs published later together with Netsvetov's earlier translations into Yukon-Kuskokwim (Netsvetov and Bel'kov 1896). There are many interesting drafts of his translations, with correc-



tions showing different stages of his work and deserving closer analysis. Bel'kov also translated the Acts of Apostles into Yukon-Kuskokwim (40). A final copy exists of a Russian-Central Alaskan Yupik Prayer book prepared by him and the Deacon Ioann Orlov in 1881 (41). In 1887 both of them wrote a translation of the Easter and Christmas liturgical prayers. Their liturgical book of translations was not published until 1896, in New York. Around 1885 Orlov also wrote Prayers accompanying them with "Slavonic" (practically archaic Russian) originals. Orlov also translated some parts of the Bible into the Central Alaskan Yupik language (42). Neither Bel'kov nor Orlov could publish most of these texts due to the change in the situation of the Orthodox Church in Alaska. Such books as Lodochnikov's Aleut prayers were published because the Aleut people collected money to pay for the cost of printing (Oleksa 1990, p. 194).

The oldest translations into Tlingit after the first attempts by Veniaminov were made by Ivan Nadezhdin, a young clergyman in Novo-Arkhangel'sk. In 1859 he finished a translation of the Gospel of Matthew into Tlingit (43) using a Cyrillic-based orthography reminiscent of the one adopted by Veniaminov for Aleut but phonemically less successful. It was never published and modern Tlingit specialists have a very low opinion of it (Krauss 1990, p. 211), as did contemporaries (Golovin 1979, p. 55, with the unjustified remarks on the insufficiency of the language itself). Nadezhdin also translated some liturgical texts into Tlingit, and compiled a Tlingit dictionary and a phrase book for the training of young clergy assistants (Shalkop 1987, p. 208). A book of prayers by Nadezhdin was published by the end of the century long after he had returned to Russia. Many Tlingit translations made by the priest Donskoi and his Tlingit Indian assistant Sinkiel (44) were only partially published at that same time (Donskoi 1895, 1901). Continuing the first attempts by Veniaminov, Donskoi tried to use some traditional Tlingit terms such as *ulitoogu* (*ka'a*) "a pure (person)" and (*kaa*) *yakgwahe'iagu* "the spirit of a living or dead human being that exists after the body dies, visits the living in dreams and may reincarnate in a matrilineal descendant of the deceased; the supernatural self that separates from the physical body at death" to render such Christian notions as "Holy Spirit" (*ulitoogu Kaa yakgwahe'iyagu*, see: Kan 1989, pp. 53, 90, 309, 317; N. Dauenhauer, R. Dauenhauer 1990, pp. 125–126). Among later Tlingit translations in the archive one may mention Regulations of a Brotherhood of the Archangel Mikhail (45) dated 1896 (see the text in English translation in: Kamenskii 1985, pp. 111–112; Kan 1985). Veniaminov's *Way to the Kingdom of Heaven* was published in Tlingit by the turn of the century; it was translated into Tlingit by the well-known interpreter Sergei Kostromitinov (1854–1915), who was ordained priest in 1910.

Some documents of the turn of the century preserved in the archive show the widespread use of Cyrillic-based Aleut literacy by the turn of the century. Some announcements and small ritual texts from different churches seem very interesting from this point of view. ∞



Multilingual School Education

The first Russian Orthodox church school was established at Kodiak by the group of clergy who had arrived there in 1794. Archimandrite Ioasaf organized schools for fifteen native Creole children in his own house; according to his later statement, the natives "are capable in both philology and art" (cited from his unpublished paper in a Russian archive: Okladnikova 1987, p. 242). Describing (in his Supplements to Khlebnikov's Notes) the fate of this first school that suffered mainly from the discord between the mission and the company, Wrangell stressed the deficiency of the first missionaries who had not paid attention to the native languages (Wrangell 1979, pp. 243–245); the same point had been insisted on in Rezanov's letters in which he criticized the monks in his arrogant style: "I also explained to the monks what missionary work consists of. I made them ashamed of not yet knowing the American language, telling them that not only the prayers but even the sermons must be translated into the American language. I commissioned them to make a dictionary, so as not to be at the mercy of the interpreters, who often interpret what is told to them incorrectly. Because a job of this kind looked as big and forbidding as a bear, I began to make this dictionary myself" (46). Rezanov tried to follow what the Shelikhovs had begun in their small bilingual school in Three Saints Bay (1784–1786), where an attempt had been made to write Alutiiq in the Russian alphabet; there twenty-five amanat (hostages, mainly children of the local chiefs) boys learned reading and writing (Shelekhov 1812/1966, I, pp. 39–40; Liapunova 1987, p. 59, 122; 1987a, p. 126; Okladnikova 1987, pp. 236–237; Dauenhauer 1990, pp. 157–158).

In contrast to the monks whose neglect of native languages Rezanov had criticized, Hieromonk Gedeon (1770–1843), who reopened the school on March 20, 1805, tried to develop linguistic studies, being a predecessor of Veniaminov. Gedeon himself studied Alutiiq and translated the Lord's Prayer into it. The text was studied at schools and sung in churches. His student of rhetoric, Paramon Chumovitskii (a godson of Timofei Chumovitskii, an early employee of Shelikhov), a Kodiak Islander, headed a team of young people who were to provide a dictionary of the language and a brief sketch of grammar, while a student of grammar Alexei Kotel'nikov worked with interpreters Khristofor Prianishnikov and Ivan Kadiakskii as teachers (Veniaminov 1984, p. 236; Pierce, ed. 1978, pp. 62, 65, 169; Liapunova 1979; 1987, p. 129; Krauss 1990, p. 206; Pierce 1990, pp. 92, 160, 412; Dauenhauer 1990, p. 158). The work was not continued after the departure of Gedeon and the dispersal of the students of the school.

Although Father German (around 1757–1836, Pierce, ed. 1978) did not seem to be interested in native languages, Gerasim Zyrianov came from his school on Spruce Island and wrote much in Alutiiq after having helped Tyzhnov.



One of Veniaminov's main merits was his stress on the importance of school education (47). When he became the North American bishop he kept insisting that every priest arrange for systematic education of the children of the parish. He thought that the Church and its representatives should be in charge of the children of those native people who had been converted to Christianity. Veniaminov had a rare (especially for a high-ranking Russian) gift of uniting brilliant and profound ideas with the ability to build an institutional network according to his plans. It should be stressed that the whole concept of the Church archive and the strict rules by which it was created were his: thus he was the unique founder of the treasury that I am describing. He showed the same capacities in planning the education of the native people. His ideas were realized by the workers of the next generation. Following his project during the nineteenth century (and in part in the first years of our century) step by step in some places (as in Novoarkhangel'skoe-Sitka, on Kodiak Island, Atka Island, Unalaska Island, St. Paul Island, St. George Island, at Belkofski, Nushagak, at Ikogmiut and St. Michael Redoubt, Napamiut, at the Kenai Mission, at Nuchek, in Juneau) special schools for the native people were created at least for a time. Most of the schools could not operate on a permanent basis, but by the end of the century there were several real centers of education. Documents on the work of all these schools are preserved in the archives. In other parts of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska some children were taught at home with the assistance of a local priest, a practice approved and welcomed by Veniaminov in a special document. Among the subjects to be taught were at least three languages: the native one (mainly reading and translating Christian texts; also singing the sacred songs in the local language, this being continued to our times in some parts of Alaska), Russian, and Church Slavonic. Later on, mainly by the end of the century, English (48) was added and Latin dropped, and in some time periods education was conducted in four languages, making this experience particularly interesting as an experiment in multilingual (and partly multicultural) communication at school.

Some Creoles, for instance Bel'kov, who had been educated by Netsvetov and other priests of the older generation later became priests themselves and were active in translating Christian texts into native dialects (on the role and fate of Creole Orthodox priests, see: Shalkop 1987, pp. 212–217; Oleksa 1990, pp. 188–190). Since some of Netsvetov's former students later on became priests and were in charge of local education, at least three generations of specialists trained in the Aleut language and in the two varieties of the Alaskan Eskimo languages may be distinguished. Their activity and the period of the most successful development of this multicultural education system lasted for approximately seventy years till the beginning of our century.

As the published materials on education in Russian America are not large (cf. the remark in: Okladnikova 1987, pp. 235–236), the rich information



contained in the Russian Orthodox Church archives is very valuable. The documents in the archives help us to see different aspects of the life of those native, Creole, and Russian children who attended church schools. A whole book could be written on the everyday life in the parish schools on the basis of these archives. We may study the rules that determined the structure of classwork of the children, the pedagogical devices used (for instance, pointing to parts of the face while learning their names), the lists of those who studied at school and their grades, also remarks on some lazy boys (49), the time schedule and the tasks performed at different times (50), the menu with the indication of the character of meals for each day (51), the sources from which school expenses were paid, particularly by the Russian American Company in the case of some sons of natives, especially Aleuts: native and Creole boys who were to be selected for the seminary by orders of the Russian colonial governor (52) etc. The Church did not want to interfere with the normal way of life and the activities of the native population: as most of people were gone for fishing and hunting in April–August only January to March and September to December were supposed to be good times for the children to study (53).

Data on the school libraries that included many copies of books in native languages (primers, catechisms, translations of the Gospels, etc.) are extraordinarily interesting. Several copies of corrected class papers of school children are preserved in the archives. We also see some results of children's attempts to write Russian words, possibly in their spare time. Thus we may see a child's scrawl on a cover of an eighteenth-century book of psalms. Evidently the child was learning numbers and Russian spelling. Mistakes in the spelling of the Russian word for "thousand" (*tysiacha*) possibly shows that the child was not Russian (54).

A document from the Unalaska school refers to translations from Aleut to Russian done by students; on the opposite page questions from the catechism and the quality of the pupils' answers are described (55). A series of reports written by the Superintendent of the Unalaska School to the Russian-American Company Unalaska office was preserved for the period from January 11, 1840, through September 1, 1841. In them he describes lessons in reading, writing, and arithmetic, as well as in Russian grammar and Biblical history, and records assessments of how each student fared in those subjects. For example, Vasilii Shebalin, son of a Creole, successfully completed all his course work and received a diploma. Iakov Zharov did reasonably well in Russian grammar, answered nineteen questions from the short catechism, and, as was true of the other students, had a special topic of study, in his case the Exodus (56).

In 1851 the priest Lavrentii Salamatov compiled a list of school children at various stages of education in the parish of St. Nicholas, which included the



islands of Atka, Amliia, Attu, Bering, and Mednyi. The list cites the accomplishments of Aleuts and Creoles who were graduated; descriptions of some teachers are given (57).

Fifteen years after he had begun his work on the Aleut language and writing, Veniaminov wrote: "Should one measure the degree of the Aleuts' enlightenment by their literacy or by the number of those who know how to read? In this respect, they will not yield in comparison to many enlightened people. In recent times, that is, since translations into their language appeared, more than a sixth have been able to read. There are villages where more than a half of the men are literate and on one island, St. Paul, almost everyone knows how to read. Literacy is spread among the Aleuts partly through the school, which had existed since 1825, but more by self-instruction. And, judging by their desire and will to learn, one may assert positively that, with time, all the Aleuts will become literate" (Veniaminov 1846d, II, p. 322; cf. p. 17; 1984, pp. 321, 164, where he remarks that on St. Paul Island they have more leisure, but that the great desire to read and write and the ability to learn quickly is seen among all the population). In some parts of the Aleut linguistic zone this prediction became true very soon. According to a report of the Russian-American Company, by January of 1847 on the Pribylov Islands "almost all the new generation" can read due to the school education organized by the Creole Shaiashnikov, father of a productive translator into Aleut, Fedorova 1971, p. 222 (58). Golovin wrote in 1862: "Unalaska School, on Unalaska Island, was founded in 1825 by the priest Ioann Veniaminov. . . Under the leadership of this distinguished mentor, the school made rapid progress and is still in beautiful condition. A tribute to this is the fact that every Aleut on the island of Unalaska is literate. This school is located in a Company building, and the teaching is done by service priests. In 1860 there were 50 boys and 43 girls in this school, mostly Aleuts" (Golovin 1979, p. 61). The report on the state of the diocese for 1866 gives approximately the same number of school children in this school (ninety boys and girls) (Liapunova 1987, p. 128).

According to the numbers given in the census of the middle of the nineteenth century, the results of school education of the Aleuts were successful. It may be supposed that the vast majority of the population, especially young men (59), became at least partly literate in Aleut and in Russian (60), although the numbers still are controversial (on conflicting points of view, see: Starr 1972; Dauenhauer 1990). It would have been interesting to compare the number of those who became literate in the Aleut-speaking area of Russian America with other parts of Russia. In general, the percentage of those literate in the rural population in Russia was very low (about 6 percent in the 1860s), although the number of church parish schools at the time of their revival by 1865 was very high (21,000 schools with more than 400,000 pupils, Brooks 1985, p. 40). But this system disintegrated shortly after the beginning of the reforms until the government gave a new impetus to the church schools as well to the new local (*zemstvo*) education (*ibid.*, p. 41 with references). In



many parts of Russia there was no such source of (at least partial) financial support of church schools as the Russian-American Company was absent. It seems that the effort of Veniaminov and all those priests and teachers who helped to organize education in a native language was innovative and its results by the middle of the nineteenth century might have surpassed the effectiveness of the comparable parish schools in the main parts of Russia, not to mention the absence of alphabets for most native languages of Siberia and the Far East. Becoming a bishop and later archbishop, Veniaminov applied his linguistic experience to the problems of using different aboriginal languages at the church service. In 1859 he himself celebrated the church service in the Yakut language (61); his work on the Yakut translation of the Christian texts is vividly described by the Russian writer Goncharov in his travel book *Frigate Pallada*.

Possibly since the time when St. Stephen of Perm' had created a special alphabet for the Old Permian (Perm-Finnish) language (an ancestor to modern Komi languages in the autonomous Komi Republic of Russia), none of the important persons in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church was as effective in educating the new converted natives in their own languages as was Ioann Veniaminov.

Efforts to spread literacy among the Yupik-speaking population were less successful than those among the Aleuts. As Golovin remarked in 1862, "a special schoolhouse has been built at the Kwikpik Mission, and service personnel there try to help converts to Christianity to become literate, but they have had only limited success so far" (Golovin 1979, p. 62).

Modern studies of endangered languages, one of the particularly serious catastrophes of the near future, have shown that the number of young children who get their school education in their native tongue willingly determines its survival (Krauss 1992; Robins and Uhlenbeck 1991). This emphasizes the importance of the work done by those people engaged either in preparing texts for school education in Aleut and Yupik dialects or in teaching of and in these languages. Although Veniaminov himself, as he states in the preface to his Aleut grammar, did not believe in the future of this language, he did his best to prolong its life. Netsvetov's position was different: he was trying to build the way for the future blossoming of the Aleut language. Both of them helped to prolong the existence of the language for eighty or ninety years. Although the number of speakers did not become larger, the number of children studying the language both in its oral and written forms remained rather large. The greatest trouble began with the end of education in Aleut in 1912 (Bergsland 1979; Krauss 1979). But still when Jochelson began his field work at Unalaska in 1909 he was assisted by two Aleuts, both of whom were literate in Aleut using Veniaminov's Cyrillic orthography: Alexei M. Iachmenev (1866-1937), who was the Aleut chief of Unalaska village, and Leontii I. Sivtsov



(1872–1919), the Russian-Aleut reader at the Orthodox Church of Unalaska (Jochelson 1990, p. 11).

Tlingit school education started in the second half of nineteenth century after a special Tlingit school had been built (a valuable collection of documents related to its construction has been preserved in the archives). Although the priest Vladimir Donskoi with the help of a native translator had rendered several important Christian prayers, a catechism, and texts of the Gospels into Tlingit, the lack of experience in teaching writing and reading in Tlingit led to the need to learn many texts by heart. As can be seen from documents in the archives, by the beginning of the twentieth century school education in native languages (particularly in Aleut and Tlingit) was mostly connected with learning, reciting, and singing Christian prayers and songs (62). Immediately after Alaska was sold there seems to have been no conflict between the new American administration and the Orthodox Church. A joint effort of the Church and the American government was needed to fund the Tlingit Indian School (63). By that time the competition with other Christian missions using mainly English as the most important or even unique language of education became a difficult aspect of life for the Orthodox community. To respond to the problems the Orthodox Church tried to develop the study of English in the local Orthodox schools. Two approaches to the linguistic education of natives may be contrasted: one followed Veniaminov's ideas, the other was usually connected with the name of Sheldon Jackson who strongly opposed both the native cultures and languages as traces of the pre-American past and the Orthodox Church (Dauehauer 1982; 1990). Jackson was victorious, and the whole linguistic structure of education began to be transformed, until in 1912 the last class in Aleut was abolished. After that most of the languages of the area lost any hope of survival. Most of the endangered languages were doomed, the only possible candidate for survival was Central Alaskan Yupik. The efforts of Netsvetov, Bel'kov and other people who helped to teach children this language might be cited among different historical factors shaping its unusual history. ∞



Social and Religious Aspects of Communication and Semiotic Contact

Although some earlier Orthodox missions to the northern parts of America are known to have existed from the middle of the eighteenth century, the regular activity of the Kodiak Vicariate started in 1794.

There were two important features of the social background of the early history of the Church. The first one was mostly demographic. As a result of the first difficult period of bloodshed connected with the struggle against Russian penetration, a large part or maybe even the majority of the male Aleut population probably was killed. As Krauss puts it, the first and worst forty years of Russian domination over Alaska in 1745–1785 was “a period of barbaric exploitation, pillage, and murder” (Krauss 1979, p. 39; for a general history of the Aleuts see Berkh 1974; Jochelson 1933; Black 1984; Liapunova 1987a with further references). Among those who supposed that a large part of the Aleut population had been murdered by the first Russian adventurers was Veniaminov, who in his survey of this period wrote: “When we count all these murders—and I do not mention those that are not fully substantiated—and take into consideration their consequences, then by no means does the number of Aleuts, dispatched to the other world by Solov’ev seem exaggerated. Even the number of 5,000 Aleuts destroyed, estimated by Mr. Sarychev, can be accepted as feasible; and it even may be that this number is very moderate” (Veniaminov 1984, p. 256; cf. also on the same page a footnote by Lydia Black who, along with several modern scholars, disagrees with Veniaminov’s evaluation of numbers finding them exaggerated) (64). The decrease of the Aleut population was evident, but some recent studies ascribe it not only to the massacre, but to other factors: wars with other tribes, epidemics (see especially Milan 1974, Turner 1983; Dumond 1990 with references), and resettlement by the Russian-American Company by which Aleut males were separated from their families and enslaved (Gibson 1987, p. 80). The numbers of the Aleut population before the Russian invasion remain controversial (Liapunova 1987a, pp. 71–89, Fedorova 1971, p. 148; 1973, p. 161; Veltre 1990, pp. 178, 183 with references). In any case it is clear that the population declined after the first period of Russian domination. Medical causes that persisted long after the first period of the Russian invasion might have been particularly important: “by the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century much of Alaska was a peripheral part of the Eurasian pool of infectious disease, both through contact with the Russian-American Company staff and their foreign visitors in southern Alaska, and by way of native trade networks across Bering Strait. From this time onward, it might be expected that the larger settlements of coastal Alaska would be visited periodically with disease in epidemic proportion, particularly those variable respiratory diseases such as influenza and the often related pneumonic disorders for

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which there is no lasting immunity, and to which the Alaskan natives have showed themselves to be so susceptible" (Dumond 1990, p. 221; see also Milan 1974; Turner 1983; Liapunova 1987a, 87–88, 116–117; Fortune 1986/1987; 1990). Other recently studied cases (Le Roy Ladurie 1978, p. 51; Gamkrelidze and Ivanov 1984, pp. 831 and 953) show that immunological factors seem to play an important role in history. The terrible consequences of this general situation may be seen in the individual biographies of Aleuts and Creoles suffering from diseases against which there was no remedy. Iakov Netsvetov's journals of his last years document the physical tortures caused by these illnesses, made unbearable by the living conditions in the circumpolar zone (still, Veniaminov did not permit him to leave the Yukon, insisting on the continuation of his work; the decision was severe to say the least). The introduction of modern medical means to which the Orthodox Church contributed (for instance, when Veniaminov and other priests struggled against the smallpox epidemic among the Tlingits using vaccination, Kan 1989; 1990) could help only in some cases. The impending physical catastrophe of growing mortality aggravated the difficulties of survival of the endangered native cultures and languages.

Partly as a result of this situation, intermarriages between Russian newcomers and the Aleuts (mainly Aleut women) became numerous. Russian adventurers, as later members of the staff of the Russian-American Company, usually came to the Aleutian Islands and Alaska without any family. The asymmetry of the male and female elements of the Russian population was just the opposite of the inverted relationship between women and men in the Aleut villages and settlements. As Gibson puts it in a strictly materialistic manner, Russians were "dependent upon the Aleuts, Kodiaks, and Tlingits for such basics as furs, provisions, labor and sex" (Gibson 1987, p. 77, see concrete data on the disproportion of men and women among the Russian population on p. 102). Most of the resulting relationships were initially illegal, but the number of marriages between Russian men and native women became large. Some illegitimate children grew up as Aleuts. Special status was given to those children whose families were officially acknowledged as being mixed.

As mentioned above, the children of the first generation resulting from such legal and illegal marriages were called in Russian "Creoles" (*kreol*). According to census data preserved in the archives, the number of Creoles by the middle of the century was very high: almost a fourth of the population in some parts of the Aleutian Islands consisted of Creoles (65), see data in Fedorova 1971, pp. 248–251; 1973, pp. 276–279. Creoles were very important for the creation of a new mixed Russian-Aleut culture (see especially Oleksa 1990; Liapunova 1987a, p. 127). Many Creoles, having been baptized in their childhood and grown up as Christians, were approved as Orthodox priests after graduating from their schools. Some of them mastered Russian, Church Slavonic, and the written form of the native language and practiced it as translators. Since they were usually bilingual from



childhood, they could easily translate from Russian (and from Church Slavonic, the sacred Slavic Orthodox language cognate to Russian) into Aleut or different variants of Alaskan Yupik. As can be seen from the survey of translations given above, the activity of the priest Iakov Netsvetov and some of his former students (Shaiashnikov, Salamatov, and Bel'kov) was particularly important.

Thus the problems of linguistic and religious contacts between Russians and the native population were partly connected to the sociobiological aspects of mixed marriages and the growing Creole population.

Modern structural anthropology, being interested in the combination of study of the rules of marriage with the other aspects of communication, may find it important that the Orthodox Creole priests were engaged in finding brides for the natives: the priest Salamatov requested permission to select brides from Bering and Mednyi Islands for the natives of Attu who had approached Salamatov with this problem. According to his own letter he had previously made similar arrangements for the other natives (66). Marriages, being the most important social event on the family level, were incorporated into the general system of communication where Orthodox priests played the key role.

The second feature of the general situation in Russian America that was partly connected with the purely biological or demographic peculiarities of the area was the coexistence and contact of different semiotic systems—languages, religious beliefs and rites, artistic symbolic structures. The linguistic difficulties in communication in Russian (important not only for the church service where mainly Church Slavonic was used, but also for trade and official purposes) were different in the parts of the diocese that included Alaska and the Aleutian and Kurile Islands. As may be seen both from the detailed vital statistics preserved in the archives and from the travel diaries of Netsvetov who visited the Kurile Islands regularly, by the middle of the nineteenth century the majority of the Aleut, Eskimo, and Ainu population of the Kurile Islands understood Russian very well. Some parts of the population by that time consisted of Russians (and some representatives of the different Eastern Siberian and Far Eastern peoples like Yakuts, i.e. the Saha people in modern terms, and Kamchadals) who had moved to the Kurile Islands from northeastern Asia. Netsvetov stated in his diaries (preserved in the archives) that he could easily communicate with the native Kurile population, since Russian was familiar to most of them (67). The situation on the Aleutian Islands and in Alaska was different. Even after church schools for native children had been opened, the number of those who knew Russian was relatively small (although the alphabets used for the dialects of Aleut, Alaskan Yupik, and Tlingit were based on Cyrillic letters, and the whole system of education required knowledge of Russian and Church Slavonic). From Netsvetov's diaries we see that, although he knew both Aleut and Central Alaskan



Yupik, he needed a translator for North Athabaskan languages. The situation deteriorated by the end of the nineteenth century. At that time most of the priests were sent from Russia (contrary to the system introduced in the first half of the nineteenth century by Bishop Innokentii, who insisted that priests should have a command of a native language). There are many documents in the archives showing the tremendous difficulties experienced by the priests who needed a translator or interpreter (68). In a letter of September 28, 1898, to Bishop Nikolai, the priest Vladimir Modestov discusses the bishop's instructions on preparing natives as interpreters. The need for interpreters became a notably serious problem as the century wore on. Following Nikolai's order that "the priest should keep with him at home two boys for the purpose of preparing future translators," Modestov explains in his letter that he had done this, losing one boy to illness, but successfully training and retaining the Creole Iakov Orlov, whose mother allowed the priest to raise him. During a four-month sabbatical, Fr. Modestov took Orlov with him to San Francisco where the boy was to improve his Russian and learn English, which, as Modestov noted, "is becoming essential even in the North of Alaska" (69).

The semiotic situation in Russian America was characterized not only by bilingualism and diglossia but maybe even by "triglossia"—each language having its own specific function: Church Slavonic was used at the church service, Russian on other official occasions, the native languages were first of all colloquial means of everyday, nonofficial communication. In some cases the functional areas of different languages overlapped: Aleut translations were read or Eskimo (Yupik) religious songs were sung at church together with the Church Slavonic and Russian parts of the service; Russian was used as a colloquial language together with a native one. Different types of borrowings and cross influences were characteristic not only for the languages of the area (Hammerich 1954; Black 1984a; cf. Oleksa 1979) but for a time there was a kind of mixture of two different sets of beliefs that was characteristic particularly for the Russian-Aleut religion and church (Okladnikov 1976, p. 125; Liapunova 1987a, pp. 129–130, 133, 136–137 with references; Black 1977; Dauenhauer 1978; 1979; Smith 1980). The use of traditional "masked performances incorporated into Christmas festivities" (L. Black in Veniaminov 1984, p. 230) may be compared to the double-faith (*dvoeverie*) in Russia. Such contact of two sets of beliefs leading to their partial fusion is not a rare event. A typologically similar combination of the elements of two religions is known in modern Cuba (a mixture of the Catholic adoration of saints and of the traditional African beliefs, correspondences between the saints and pagan gods being very widely known, shown in many local museums and exploited both in the mass Afro-Cuban culture and in sophisticated painting and poetry), Mexico, Brazil and other parts of Latin America, and in Sri Lanka (syncretism of Southern Buddhism and some traditional cults studied recently by Obeyesekere, Yalman, and other scholars). The oldest documented example is the Ancient Oriental



syncretic cults with the identification of Mesopotamian Tammuz and similar gods in other religions of the area. In some cases syncretic cults incorporated onto Orthodox seasonal rites are widespread in Alaska: the Starring may be an example (Fienup-Riordan 1990; Inouye 1990).

For the development of the visual arts, architecture, and music in Alaska at that period it was important that many natives, particularly Creoles, tried to combine some traditional techniques with the Old Russian heritage that had originally developed from the Byzantine Church (Black 1990; Oleksa 1990, pp. 192–193; Smith 1982).

In some recent publications on the Russian-Aleut religion and the Russian-Aleut Church there is a tendency to describe the situation of the previous century in a nostalgic, romantic manner. A new myth of the original native culture mixed with the Russian Orthodox religion with the image of Veniaminov as its cultural hero may be perceived from these works. Unfortunately, the main aspects of the traditional culture had already been lost by that time, especially in the areas where the Russian influence was particularly strong.

An important problem that partly determined communication with natives was their relationship to shamanism. In the first half of the nineteenth century most of the Eskimo and the Native American Indian population (speaking languages of the Eyak-Tlingit-Athabaskan, or Na-Dene group) practiced various forms of shamanistic religion (different from that of many Aleuts who by that time had been converted to Orthodox Christianity, although some relics of older beliefs were added to it). In the brilliant anthropological works of Veniaminov one may see more than a scholarly interest in shamanism.

Veniaminov was influenced by eighteenth century thinkers such as Rousseau, being in this a forerunner of Levi-Strauss, who stressed the moral value of the savages. In his letter of 1843, when he was studying the Tlingits and their language, he wrote: "The more I become acquainted with the savages, the more I become convinced that, as far as morality is concerned, the so-called wild ones are much better than many of the so-called enlightened persons. Does this mean that we, with our enlightenment, are moving away from rather than approaching perfection?" (Barsukov, ed. 1897, vol. I, p. 97: English translation after Kan 1990, p. 304).

He tried to show some aspects of the traditional beliefs that are either close to the Christian concepts or might have prepared the natives for acceptance of the Christian faith. From what we know about the interaction between Veniaminov and the Aleut shaman Ivan Smirennikov (Oleksa 1987, pp. 132–135; Mousalimas 1990), the former studied the apparition of the spirits to the latter. Veniaminov even asked Smirennikov to continue his healing and advising activity



among those who had been baptized. The same tolerance and intention to understand shamans' problems was characteristic of monk German (Mousalimas 1990). By the end of the century an extraordinary case showing the Creole Orthodox priest Bel'kov's tolerance was described. The Yupik villagers wanted to kill a shaman. They were suspicious about his use of masks and thought he had turned into a sorcerer. Zakharii Bel'kov chopped up the masks, prepared tea made with the splinters on the fire, and drank it. People saw that no harm came to the priest, so they let the shaman go (Netsvetov 1984, p. 482). Bel'kov saved the shaman's life trying to give an example of true Christian behavior to the Yupik people.

During the entire period of activity of the Russian Orthodox Church of Alaska, the native population was being converted from shamanism ("paganism" as it was called by the Russian priests) to Christianity. The linguistic and communicational aspect of this process appears in the acquisition of new names by the converts. The archives preserve long lists (in special "books" of a definite format) of the converts giving their original shamanistic name and the one assigned to them after the baptism. A change of name is the most important symbolic stage of development of a personality being transformed by a new religion.

Different approaches to the conversion may be seen in our documents. The one widely used by priests in Bishop Innokentii's time was that expressed in his special instructions about conversion written in the early period of his work in America. He insisted that there be no coercion of any kind before the conversion (70). This is reflected in the form of the lists of the converted people who were to state their reasons for conversion and write on whose instigation they had made their decision. The other aspect of conversion may be seen in an official decree of the middle of the nineteenth century (71) in which Emperor Alexander II stated that he was not satisfied with the number of converts (more than 6,000) that had been given to him. He wrote a resolution demanding a much larger number of converts (reminding one of comparable social events in Russia in the next century when, for instance, high authorities stated the numbers of future members of the Communist party there were to be or the number of former farmers—"kulaks"—to be sent into exile in Siberia).

Some priests at that time were very skillful in converting many natives. Particularly impressive were the data connected to the missionary work of the Creole priest Iakov Netsvetov, who in 1845–1852 converted 1,516 natives, as stated in a special document signed by Bishop Innokentii (72). From the documents of the period it follows that Netsvetov himself considered the regular work of a priest in distant churches and remote villages to be an instrument for opposing the shamanism to which the natives might revert. For the period 1860–1880 several documents suggest successful conversions among Eskimos and Tlingits, although



the role of shaman remained very important in most of their villages. In a letter of October 9, 1889, the Rev. Donskoi of Sitka parish informs Vladimir, the Bishop of Alaska and the Aleutians, of his conversations with the Iakutat Tlingits. They expressed the desire of their chief (*toen*) and his followers to be baptized into the Orthodox faith (73). One may find two important critical moments in the attitude of Tlingits toward Christianity. The first was connected with an epidemic of smallpox that showed the Tlingits the effectiveness of the European methods used by the Russian clergy, as opposed to the shamans who did nothing against the illness (Gibson 1987; Kan 1990). The second one was the period after the sale of Alaska. At that time the Tlingits accepted the Orthodox creed, being opposed to the new masters of the land (Kamenskii 1985; Kan 1989). But even then the role of shamans among the Northern-Athabaskan people like the Tanaina (Kenai) made it difficult to convert the natives (74).

A partial revival of shamanism may be seen at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, with all the economic and social changes in Alaska. The competition of different Christian denominations seemed to lessen the importance of each of them, at least for a time. Some natives returning to shamanism declared that they "had offended shamans" by a conversion that they themselves had not considered to be an important event. According to Fr. Petr Orlov's report, the villagers of Nanauk regretted converting to Orthodoxy (75).

Of course, the competition among different variants of Christianity should not be exaggerated. Amfilokhii, priest of Holy Cross Church in Ikogmiut, tells in his diary how he traveled in a snowstorm. The dogs had to stop due to bad weather. He succeeded in finding a Catholic Mission, there Fr. Lucchesi took him and his companions in and they stayed overnight (76). In difficult situations Christian priests helped each other.

Later on the revival of shamanism proved to be less important or long-lasting than the creation of a mixed form of the native religion based on the Russian Orthodox faith. In discussing the problem of the evil influence of Russians on the old Aleut native culture that was practically destroyed (Veltre 1990), one should keep in mind the use of mixed forms of Orthodox beliefs by natives in their struggle for cultural independence. It is true that traditional oral culture may be either destroyed or distorted with the introduction of writing as a method of acculturation (cf. on Aleuts: Ransom 1945). But the written record of the texts of the old culture made by representatives of a mixed culture can be important for its preservation, as may be seen from the example of Jochelson's Aleut assistants at the beginning of our century.

In analyzing different aspects of the relations between the Alaskan Orthodox Church and shamanism, some archaic features of the beliefs and



rituals of the natives must be considered. According to statements of the Russian orthodox priests and travellers not only at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but even in the 1850s, such customs as the killing of slaves, sometimes taken as prisoners from another tribe, still existed among the Tlingits despite being officially outlawed by the Russian government (Veniaminov 1984, p. 426; Kamenskii 1985, pp. 36, 97, fn. 40; see also discussion of all the known sources on the custom: Kan 1989, pp. 36, 132–134, 188, 221, 238 with further references; cf. Khlebnikov 1985, pp. 85, 220, point 11). Veniaminov managed to save one of them who was allowed to go to the Russian settlement (77). One might suggest that the custom belongs to one of those Pan-American customs the origin of which can be described in Levi-Strauss's words: "it seems to me pretty obvious that, as was ascertained during recent years by the so-called Berkeley school, the population of the Americas before Columbus was much larger than it had been supposed to be. And since it was much larger, it is obvious that these large populations were to some extent in contact with one another, and that beliefs, practices and customs were, if I may say so, seeping through. Any neighborhood population was always, to some extent, aware of what was going on in the other population" (Levi-Strauss 1979, p. 26). That conclusion suggests that human sacrifice, which according to Veniaminov and many other authors (as also the habit of artificially distorting children's skulls, the results of which were described by Veniaminov) still existed among the Tlingits and might be compared to similar rites known among the Aztecs and several other peoples of Pre-Columbian Meso-America. Usually the person to be killed belonged to another tribe. Is it typologically similar to the ritual sacrifice of a slave as a substitute for a king in some Ancient Near Eastern sacrifices? Is it similar to the human sacrifices at the funeral of a chief in some ancient Iranian tribes? Is it connected to the xenophobia and genocide of recent times (among the early victims were many natives, including those of the Americas)? In a broader context one might think about Rene Girard's understanding of the role of human sacrifice in the civilization of this century. In any case it cannot be regarded only as an ancient American rite without modern European parallels. I had a personal experience that showed to me how close to our recent historical past this problem was. About thirty years ago I gave an interview to a Moscow newspaper, in which I spoke about the possible meaning of history. As an example I mentioned the fall of large Pre-Columbian kingdoms like that of Aztecs, which perished just when the number of human sacrifices grew larger and larger every year, with tens of thousands of prisoners killed. The interview was to be published, but then I was informed that the editor of the newspaper prohibited it, writing on the margin of the proofs of the printed text: "A serious political mistake." In a totalitarian society the idea that a state oriented toward human sacrifice was doomed appeared to be revolutionary.



Not all pan-American rites that may be reflected in the customs of the Alaskan natives are so bloodthirsty. In Veniaminov's book on the Unalaska area and later in Priest Salamatov's travel journal one may find a description of how the Aleut people were mummified. After their intestines had been taken out, the mummies were dressed in old clothes and placed in dry caves. Mummies of the forefathers were used to predict the future. The method of divination involved the reading of body forms (78). Salamatov's information is supported by archaeological evidence on the Aleut mummies (Hrdlicka 1945, 182–194, 417–420 with references; cf. a more popular account: McCracken 1930, p. 230 and ff.). A hypothesis about the Pan-American nature of the rite is supported not only by parallels from the burial customs of other peoples of the Northwest Coast of America, but by well-known examples from such cultures as those of the Pueblo and the Inca.

Some peculiar forms of behavior possibly induced by shamanistic rites might have disappeared after conversion. The "miracle" documented in the case of the mad Stefan Ingrinak (Ingahamiut) consisting in the disappearance of some neurotic (or psychotic) symptoms in the native after his conversion might be interpreted in this way (79). One is tempted to apply to this story S. N. Davidenkov's theory that the behavior of shamanistic societies, such as the Eskimo, is internally neurotic (Davidenkov 1990).

The picture of different creeds interfering with and partly opposing one another becomes particularly complicated at the beginning of the twentieth century, when several parishioners were behaving as "heretics" according to some documents preserved in the archives. Some Tlingits who converted from paganism to Orthodoxy found it necessary to go to the Presbyterian denomination and then to return to Orthodoxy; their names were changed accordingly: Ivan Leskov became James, Anna was Edith for a short period (80).

At the same time documents from the end of the nineteenth century show evidence of the role of the church in the struggle against some bad habits spreading among the population with the first elements of the modern civilization. This is exemplified by the Tlingit pledge taken by members of the St. Michael Mutual Aid Society, which was made up of natives who had accepted Orthodox Christianity. The bylaws of the Society not only commit members to service in the church, but also dictate behavior such as refraining from card playing, drinking, and fighting (81); for details on the relation of Tlingits to Russians, see Kamenskii's book with Sergei Kan's supplements (Kamenskii 1985). Fraternities were formed in different parts of Alaska and were instrumental in solving difficulties and quarrels: for example, at an annual Eskimo (Yupik) fraternity meeting an attempt was made to reconcile two relatives who had quarreled over steel traps (82).



Since the difference between the earlier period of spiritual development of the Alaskan population and the boom at the turn of the century is related mainly to money, it would be interesting to study in detail all the documents that give data on the situation of the church. In the middle of the nineteenth century some money could be raised for the church by selling Aleut books, especially publications by Veniaminov (83). In the 1890s it was difficult to get Aleut books that had not been reprinted (84). But when in the new period of competition with other denominations a series of books in native languages was published or reprinted (all in all no less than fifteen versus six books published in the middle of the century due to Veniaminov's efforts, Krauss 1990, p. 211), the prayers in Aleut were sent to Sitka from the Consistory with a strange question: "Does anyone in your parish know Aleut?" (85); evidently the number of those who might read the language was lessening. Not all routine financial operations of the church became possible at that time, but the priests found a solution. In a letter, Amfilokhii informs the Bishop that he would give half a year's salary as a contribution to the Palestine mission on behalf of the parish; the parish would reimburse him upon their return after the hunting and fishing (86). Usually contributions to the Palestine mission were made at that very season without regard for the activity cycles of the natives. Of course, the need for collecting money for the Palestine mission in Alaska where the life of an average parishioner was so difficult is dubious.

The picture of modern life coming to Alaska (especially after gold became the main economic factor in the area) makes one think about the reasons why the previous structure of the society changed. In discussing the need for the Russian-American Company to remain conservative with regard to the Aleuts, Veniaminov in his general ethnological work insisted on refraining from radical changes: "Since the former liberty of the Aleuts (which was more imaginary than real) and their government (also far from perfect) are irrecoverable, there is no need to change the present Aleut governance, to which they are already accustomed, for any other. Any change in their governance will be injurious, even disastrous" (Veniaminov 1840, II, pp. 172-174; 1984, p. 245). This prediction proved to be right. Recently it has become fashionable to say that the Decembrists may have played a role in the work of the Russian-American Company, where Ryleev, one of the Decembrist leaders and head of the company office, was active, but in practice they either had no time or could not change anything in the company (see Bolkhovitinov 1974; Liapunova 1987a, pp. 104-105 with references). It seems that the low level of the company's economic productivity (especially in such fields as mining) helped to save both the natural and semiotic (cultural and linguistic) environment, although the animals, being the main object of those interested in the fur trade, were greatly depleted. The "fur rush" that led the first Russian adventurers and later the founders of the Russian-American Company to Alaska was only the first act of a tragedy, the



main part of which came with the gold rush, which was anticipated in the image of the golden fleece repeated by the first Russian travelers and businessmen at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Describing his journey to Alaska, Davydov wrote: "These latter-day Argonauts, also journeying for fleeces, but this time to America, are worthy of more amazement than those led by Jason" (Davydov 1977, p. 90). Davydov's host in Kodiak, Baranov, whom he admired (*ibid.*, pp. 104–105) and in whose house he spent the evening of the Trinity Day (May 24, 1803) singing and dancing (*ibid.*, pp. 119–120), had first used the image in his song written on the Northwest Coast of America in 1799, but published only recently (Khlebnikov 1985, p. 221):

The Argonauts were seduced by the glitter of gold;
They started to search for the golden-fleeced skin;
Their service might have been good,
It might have been important for the homeland
If only they had known about this part of the world!
Although there are no golden-fleeced skins here,
Another gold can be obtained here instead of them.

Argonavty bleskom zlata obol'stilis',
Kozhi zlatorunnoi iskati pustilis';
Sluzhit' by im možhno,
Otechestvu vazhno—
Esli by znali pro zdeshnii krai!
Zlatorunnykh kozh zdes' khot' ne vedetsia,
No drugoe zlato za nikh dostaetsia.

This metaphor was realized after the discovery of Alaskan gold. Probably the best cultural image of the period might be not the golden fleece, but the golden calf. Its adoration made all other values less important. Maybe at least some languages (such as Tlingit) and native cultures survived because of the relatively low level of economic development of the whole area. With modern technology the danger of the complete destruction of ancient traditions became obvious.

Some relics of the old system, such as the use of Church Slavonic, have been preserved in the new context. As English has become the main language of administration and commerce (and since 1912 also of education), not only native languages (such as Aleut, Eskimo or Tlingit) but also Church Slavonic (to a lesser degree Russian) as a sacred one turned into a sociolinguistic symbol of a culture of a separate ethnic group. That may partly help to explain the survival of Church Slavonic or Russian as a sacred language in some parts of Alaska that still preserve traces of the multicultural system that was built in the nineteenth century (87). ∞



Notes

(1) The Alaskan Russian Church Archives (ARChA), Manuscript Division (MD), the Library of Congress (LC). MD and LC will not be repeated after ARChA since all the documents with this label are located in LC, MD. The first combination of a letter and a number after the name of the archive refers to a container, e.g., D 248, the number after the symbol for the container refers to the reel, e.g. 172 (Kodiak Island-Diocese Administration-Icon of Saint John the Baptist, Note from Fr. Tikhon Shalamov accompanying the carved image).

(2) The Gennadii V. Yudin Collection of Russian-American Company Papers (abbreviated YC), MD, LC, Box 1, Reel 1.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 7.; cf. also Chistiakov's instructions to Vasilev on the treatment of the natives: Liapunova and Fedorova 1979, 74–75, translated in: VanStone 1988, pp. 84–85.

(4) Cf. the following statement by this writer: "How may Japan become the greatest nation in the world? . . . She should move her capital to the country of Kamchatka . . . She should build a great stronghold on Saghalien . . . This, in turn, will lead to the acquisition of the American islands, which are Japan's possessions manifestly," Tsunoda, de Bary, Keene 1964, p. 50. The Aleutian Islands are meant here. A strange realization of the idea was attempted during the Second World War with the Japanese coming to the Aleutian islands, cf. Bergsland 1979, p. 22 and documentary evidence in: Bergsland 1959, pp. 126–127.

(5) Tsunoda, de Bary, Keene 1964, p. 55: Honda Toshiaki "Secret plan for managing the country" [I have changed one evident mistake in the translation]. A similar appraisal of the Russian approach towards the natives is found in notes of some British travelers: Liapunova 1987a, pp. 58–59. The physician Dobrotvorsky, whose Ainu dictionary was published after his premature death in 1875, is an example of a Russian official who devoted himself to the study of the Ainu language in the nineteenth century. Dobrotvorsky's dictionary, which includes essays on the physical anthropology of the Ainu people as well, was among the first scholarly books on the topic. It was praised by such specialists in the languages of the Far East as E. D. Polivanov. According to a recent work by Blazhek, Ainu is possibly related to Austro-onesian, although another hypothesis suggests links to several neighboring languages. On Kurile Ainu see: Torii 1921 and references in Majewicz A. and Majewicz E. 1983–1985, pp. viii–xviii.

(6) A more common form *toion*, a local Siberian and Russian American word of Yakut origin meaning later mainly an American Indian, Aleut or Eskimo leader appointed by the Russian-American Company to assist in obtaining furs from the natives, Van Stone 1973, p. 86; 1988, p. 117. In this older document it has a general meaning of "chief."

(7) ARChA, D27, 56, Kurile Islands, On the report of the Kamchatka Ecclesiastical Consistory with a presentation of the agreement made with a *toen*. In the first half of the nineteenth century the Ainu population on the Kurile islands was very small (79 persons by January 1, 1836, Wrangell 1980, p. 187, later usually no more than 105 persons according to the data of the middle of the century, see numbers for 1835–1841, 1847–1856 in: Fedorova 1971, p. 148, 250; 1973, pp. 164; Netsvetov 1980, p. 166 where 50 males and 50 female inhabitants are



found on Shumshu Island, Russians included). According to the parish records preserved in the archives, by the middle of the nineteenth century the Kurile Islands were populated mostly by the Ainu, the Aleut and Eskimo people (resettled by Russians from Kodiak Island as if in anticipation of the future violent redistribution of different ethnic groups in Stalin's time), as well as by Russians and some other Siberian natives, such as Yakut. Especially interesting are data of the Confessional List of the Kurile Islands, Simusira and Urup, for 1846, compiled by Fr. Andrei Miloradskii on August 30, 1846 (ARChA, D 27, 56, Kurile Islands, Parish Records) where a large number of Aleuts and/or Eskimos (the Russian terminology of the period did not differentiate between the two groups) on the Kurile Islands is shown, on their settlement (maybe partly from older times, Black 1984, pp. 36–37) on Urup and other islands and on the prehistory of the Russian settlements on the Kurile Islands see Netsvetov 1980, pp. 169–170 and comments on p. 258; Liapunova 1987, p. 103; Tikhmenev 1979. According to Miloradskii on the Urup Island the main governor was a Yakut, there was a peasant from Tiumen' (Western Siberia), also Eskimos and Aleuts besides the main Ainu population. See also a list of the converted Aleuts and/or Eskimos on the Kurile Islands for 1859 and vital statistics showing interrelationships between Aleuts/Eskimos, Russians, Kamchadals (on the possibility of their early presence on the Northern Kurile Islands see: Black 1984, p. 36), and others: ARChA, D 27, 56, Kurile Islands, Parish Records-Confessional List-Urup; *ibid.*, 1859—Vital statistics (the data are different from those in Fedorova 1971, p. 185; 1973, p. 205 where the whole population of the islands Shumshu and Urup by 1860 is shown as 253 with only 1 Russian and 10 Creoles). According to the archive materials at least on some of the Northern Kurile Islands the Ainu remained approximately one third of the population, whereas the Russians coming from Siberia and colonizing the islands were equal to them in number as well as the Eskimo and Aleut people. The absence of the Japanese in these lists may be simply due to the fact that by that time there were no Christians among them. Otherwise from the documents of the archives it seems that the Japanese were present mainly as military people in their special barracks. Most of the native population of the Kurile Islands understood Russian by the time Iakov Netsvetov visited them in 1834, 1838, 1839 and 1840; according to his Travel Journal (ARChA, D45, 66, Atka and adjoining islands, p. 186 and ff.; Netsvetov 1980, p. 114) in 1834 he "taught and sermonized as needed in the Russian language, as the Kuriles are sufficiently fluent in it;" in 1838 he says: "I taught in the Russian language, as all the Kuriles, both men and women, to my great pleasure, spoke it very well" (Netsvetov 1980, p. 166). That coincides with the conclusion of Davydov who visited the Kurile Islands thirty-two years earlier (in 1802) and found that all the islanders spoke Russian (Davydov 1977, p. 92).

(8) LC, YC, Box 1, Reel 1. See the English translation: Tikhmenev 1979, p. 77 (Baranov's attempt to build a church is described).

(9) LC, YC, Box 1, Reel 1.

(10) *Ibid.*, pp. 34–35. The details concerning the decoration of this church given in later documents show the amount of money spent by the Russian American Company: for instance on 15 January 1847 its main office approved the order in the amount of 650 rubles in silver for the iconostasis of St. Michael's Cathedral, see LC, MD, Oversize cab. 5, drawer 13. The financial relations between the church and the company seemed to be reciprocal: in the middle of the nineteenth century gifts (mainly furs) from the natives (particularly Aleuts)



could not be accepted if the native who wanted to give the donation had an outstanding debt with the Russian American Company: To the Very Reverend Lavrentii Salmatov, Atka St. Nicholas Church from Toen of the Areanov Aleut Feodor Didiukhin, confidential report, ARChA, D 35, 60 (Atka-Financial Contributions-Gifts-1858-1864).

(11) See on Veniaminov also: Barsukova 1905; Liapunova 1975; Okladnikov 1976; 1983; Garrett 1979; Kan 1990, pp. 300-304; Pierce 1990, pp. 521-527.

(12) A striking typological parallel may be seen in the Old Bactrian writing (based on the Greek model). The end of a word is regularly marked by a sign for ° that was not pronounced.

(13) Black 1977; Liapunova 1987a, pp. 130-133. There were several Aleut toions with this last name: Pierce 1990, 391-392. Reward for Ivan Pan'kov called both *toen* "chief" and *starosta* "elder" is mentioned at the time when Veniaminov had already become a bishop: see a document of 1848, ARChA, D49, 67-68. Ivan Pan'kov's contributions to the church in the form of a birdskin parka (a native dress) and silver watch is described in a document kept at ARChA, D 68, 78.

(14) Veniaminov, Ivan and Ivan Pan'kov, *Katikhizis, ili, Kratkoe izlozhenie Pravoslavnago Christianskago zakona*. Manuscripts are preserved at St. Herman's Pastoral School, Kodiak (Krauss 1985, p. 215) and at the Russian Central Historical Archive: Liapunova 1987a, p. 132.

(15) From an unpublished letter in the Russian archives: Khlebnikov 1985, p. 16.

(16) See on his biography: Netsvetov 1980; 1984; Pierce 1990, pp. 380-383; Shalkop 1987, pp. 212-215; Oleksa 1990, pp. 188-189. His brother Osip was educated at the expense of the Russian-American Company in St. Petersburg where he came in 1821 together with Kashevarov, another gifted Creole boy: Pierce 1990, p. 212 (the two brothers were mixed up in Fedorova 1973, pp. 338-339; VanStone 1977, p. 9).

(17) From the extensive private library of Netsvetov only one book is preserved in the archives: Book about the duties of parish priests (*Kniga o dolzhnostiakh presviterov prikhodskikh*) by Georgii, Abbot of Gumilev, Moscow: Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, 1801 (the book bears an inscription from which it is seen that it was given to him by one of the seminary students on October 15, 1825). Upon Netsvetov's death all items except for books were sold at auction (to pay for his debts mainly caused by the need to give some compensation to his assistants in difficult northern travels). In the document concerning the list of books it is said that some of the books were ancient, some lost, what remained was distributed to clergy or was kept in the Consistory, ARChA, B22, 21-22, -Clergy Dossier-Netsvetov-1864. Besides having his own large library, Netsvetov (as also Veniaminov) borrowed books from the Novo-Arkhangelsk library founded by Khlebnikov, see fragments of the unpublished letters from Russian archives: Khlebnikov 1985, p. 245.

(18) According to the Creole Deacon Iakov Netsvetov's letter to the Irkutsk office of the Russian American Company dated April 28, 1826 (ARChA, B 21, 21-Clergy Dossier-



Netsvetov-1826), he could not have earned anything before the church was built and consecrated (although being fond of books he still had to pay for them in this difficult period).

(19) See the decrees of Mikhail (Michael), Archbishop of Irkutsk, Nerchinsk, and Yakutsk, ordaining Netsvetov and granting the Creole priest Iakov Netsvetov permission to consecrate his newly built church of St. Nicholas on the island of Atka, 4 March and 11 April 1828: ARChA, B 22, 21-Clergy Dossier-Netsvetov and D 34, 59–60-Atka-Buildings-Property-Church Building-St.Nicholas-1828–1864.

(20) It seems that a term for “writing” (as well as for “reading”) should be reconstructed for Proto-Aleut (or Eskaleut?) on the base of such words although it is not clear to what system of writing it might refer. In this case one may see an illustration of Veniaminov’s idea about the old culture being reflected in the Aleut language. A similar situation is found in Yeniseyan and some other ancient families of Eurasia. On the Indo-European terms for writing see: Ivanov and Gamkrelidze 1984.

(21) The manuscript copy preserved in the archive (ARChA, D 346, 226 Sitka-Education-Management-Second Printing of the Aleut Primer) belongs to the time before the publication of the second edition of the Aleut Primer (ca. 1845). The prayer in Russian (*ibid.*, p. 10) followed by the Aleut translation is particularly informative from the point of view of the organization of the bilingual service.

(22) Letter to Unalaska Ascension Church priest Grigorii Golovin from the Sitka Archangel Church priest Ioann Veniaminov regarding the Aleut Gospel, April 19, 1835, ARChA, B 37, 32-Clergy Dossier-Veniaminov, Ioann-1834–1845. *

(23) Veniaminov’s idea on the possibility of finding languages cognate to Aleut (and Eskimo that he considered to be quite close to the former) seems to be substantiated by Uhlenbeck’s suggestion of the relationship of the Eskimo-Aleut and Indo-European (Uhlenbeck 1935; Hammerich 1952 and 1970) and by more recent attempts to reformulate a similar thought using the Nostratic approach. Some of the eventually cognate terms (such as the names of the “salted sea,” Aleut *al’* in *al’ag’uk* “sea, salt,” *aluq* “sea waves,” possibly also *alaaq* “whale” (but see other reconstructions of the Eskaleut whale names in Mudrak 1989, p. 113), *aladaaq* “porpoise” (from: a small whale, Veniaminov 1846, Dictionary, p. 9); Indo-European **sal-* “salt,” Sanskrit *salila-* “sea” (Gamkrelidze, Ivanov 1984, vol. 2, pp. 674, 703), Luwian *al-* “sea,” Eastern Baltic **salima-s* “salted lake” (Lithuanian *solymas*, Latvian *salims*, Delamarre 1991, p. 189); “star,” Aleut *st’aq* “star”; Indo-European **Haster-/ster-* with the possible connection to the Afro-Asiatic name of a “morning star, Venus= Astarte, Ishtar”; “eye,” Aleut *daq-*: Luwian *taw-* from the Indo-European **s/t-okw-*, Hittite *sakuwa* “fire,” Aleut *qignaq* “fire” from Eskaleut **?ik(i)ne-* “fire,” Mudrak 1989, 116 (but cf. also Mudrak 1986, pp. 228, 239): Indo-European **Hi/ugn-*, Latin *ignis*, Sanskrit *agnih*; “second, another”: Aleut *alak* “two,” Latin *alius*, etc.) are really striking and support a possibility of distant Eskimo-Aleut-Indo-European (or maybe marginal Eastern-Western Nostratic) relationship revealed also by some far-reaching coincidences in the main grammatical oppositions in the verbal system (first discovered in Uhlenbeck’s pioneering studies on the Eskimo-Indo-European connections), Ivanov 1986. Some words, if related, may be borrowed from a similar third language: Aleut *ama-k* “blood”: Greek *haima* (another Eskimo-Aleut term for “blood” reconstructed as **?arv*,

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Mudrak 1989, may be connected to the Indo-European **ker-w-* "raw meat, blood"). A different view of the "Escalean" in its relation to the Nostratic macrofamily is suggested by O. A. Mudrak: Mudrak 1984, Dolgopolsky 1992 with references; see also on Uralic (Eastern Nostratic) connections: Bergsland 1959a.

(24) The semantic development of the verb "to lose, to be lost" acquiring the second meaning "to die," "to be dead" found by Veniaminov both in Siberian Russian and Modern Aleut can be compared to a similar process in the ancient Indo-European languages, cf., for instance, Old Hittite *mer-* "to be lost" cognate to **mer-* "to die, to be dead."

(25) See a report on Netsvetov's travels and linguistic studies within the parish to the islands of Mednyi, Bering, and Attu: To His Eminence, Innokentii, Bishop of Kamchatka, Kurile and Aleutian Islands, and Cavalier, a most humble letter from Rev. Iakov Netsvetov, Pastor of St. Nicholas Church on Attu, 30 July 1843, ARChA, D 28, 56–57 Bering Island & Mednyi Island-Travel Journal-Netsvetov-1843, particularly p. 5; cf. also Netsvetov 1980 and his Travel Journal quoted above in the n. 4.

(26) Russian-Aleut Dictionary by Iakov Netsvetov, ARChA, C2, 38.

(27) ARChA, C1, 37 Translations. See also a biographical statement and an evaluation of the achievements of Deacon (later priest) Innokentii Shaiashnikov, written in 1847 by the Rev. Netsvetov. The document was signed by Bishop Innokentii (Veniaminov), who ordained Shaiashnikov on August 26, 1848. In the document, as required by the Russian-American caste designation system, Shaiashnikov is denoted as the "son of a Creole" Kasian Shaiashnikov. Cf. Performance evaluation of Innokentii Shaiashnikov by Rev. Netsvetov for 1847, ARChA, B 30, 27.

(28) ARChA, C1, 37; C2, 38 Translations.

(29) *Markagagan il'an Tunnusag'xisam Angaligadi gasada*, ARChA, C1, 37, p. 166, footnote.

(30) ARChA, C2, 38.

(31) ARChA, C2, 38.

(32) Veniaminov had begun his linguistic and anthropological work on Tlingits relying on a Creole interpreter (Barsukov 1897, vol. 1, p. 30; the text of a translation by a Sitkan interpreter named Dimitrii is reproduced in Veniaminov 1846a, pp. 25–26) before (in connection with the events of the smallpox epidemic) he decided to devote himself completely to them as he wrote to Litke in 1837 (Pierce 1990, p. 523; Okladnikova 1987, pp. 228–229; Kan 1990, pp. 301–304). The first journey of Veniaminov to the Tlingit area occurred in October/November 1837: To His Eminence Innokentii, Bishop of Irkutsk, Nirschinsk, Yakutsk, and Cavalier, from the priest of the Sitka St. Michael the Archangel Church, Ioann Veniaminov, a most humble report, April 19, 1838, ARChA, D 330, 217 Sitka-Conversion Reports-Tlingit-by Veniaminov-1837–1838. Later travels of Veniaminov are described in ARChA, D437, 279. On Veniaminov's travels around the Diocese, 1842–1843, see also a Letter from the Governor of Russian Alaska to Veniaminov acknowledging the receipt of his report on his visits to the Alaskan parishes, *ibid.*, p. 12.



(33) Wrangell succeeded in selecting for his very short list of correspondences between Northern Athabascan (Ahtnan), Eyak, and Tlingit just those items (Wrangell 1980, p. 51) that are accepted by modern linguistic comparison: see on Tlingit *tat* "night" (:Ahtnan *tatsche*) Pinnow 1966, p. 88; on Tlingit *tyk* "ice" (:Ahtnan *ttoen*, Eyak *ttetz*) *ibid.*, p. 138 (cf. also Krauss and Leer 1981, pp. 54, 55, 191); on Tlingit *tte* "stone" (Ahtnan *ttzesch*, Eyak *ttza*, a word with clear Yeniseyan connections that might be explained also by diffusion) Pinnow 1966, p. 95; Krauss and Leer 1981, pp. 83, 139, 193; on Tlingit *schaawyt=cawat* (Ahtnan *schaat*, the first part of the compound is identical to a North-Caucasian stem, but see an interesting remark on the Ahtnan noun in a pioneering comparative dictionary that strangely unites linguistic intuition with archaic prescientific ideas on the origin of languages: Leesberg 1903, p. 77) Pinnow 1969, pp. 115–116; on Tlingit *nakaze=naGas'e* "fox" (:Ahtnan *nakattse*, Eyak *nakattze*, a migrational loan-word found also in Kutenai *naa'k'ayo* "fox"?), *ibid.*, p. 83 (**na-Gu* "red fox"); on Tlingit *chtschan* "fire" (:Ahtnan *tchon*) *ibid.*, p. 64 (the form given for Tlingit by Wrangell appears close to Haida *tc'aa'no*). Two of these words (names of "stone" and "fire") were mentioned among five examples of a "small number of words that are very much alike in the two languages" by Boas when seventy years later (in 1907) without knowing his predecessors he rediscovered the similarity of Tlingit and Athabascan: Boas 1974, p. 181.

(34) To His Eminence Innokentii, Bishop of Irkutsk, Nirchinsk and Yakutsk, and Cavalier, from the priest of St. Michael the Archangel Church Ioann Veniaminov, humble report, April 5, 1837 (ARChA, D 339, 222 Sitka-Diocese Administration-Training of Native priests-1837).

(35) Opinion of the Kodiak about my translations compiled in their language, pp. 2–3, ARChA, B 35, 31.

(36) ARChA, C 2, 38 Translations. See also a letter from Petr, Bishop of Novo-Arkhangel'sk, to Archbishop Innokentii about Larionov's translation, May 12, 1867, ARChA, D 249, 172 Kodiak Island-Diocese Admin.-Translation-1867.

(37) ARChA, C2, 38 Translations.

(38) ARChA, B2, 7–8, Clergy Dossier-Bel'kov, Zakharii, 1861–1869; cf. also Netsvetov 1984, pp. 480–481.

(39) ARChA, C3, 38–39 Translations-Bel'kov.

(40) ARChA, C3, 38–39 Translations-Yukon-Kuskokwim-ca. 1880.

(41) ARChA, C3, 38–39 Translations-Yukon-Kuskokwim-1881.

(42) ARChA, C2, 38 Translations.

(43) ARChA, C3, 38–39 Translations-Tlingit.

(44) The problems connected with the publication of Donskoi's Tlingit translations are discussed in several documents in the archive (ARChA, D341, 223 Sitka-Education-Books-Tlingit translation-1899–1902). From them it is clear that officials in Moscow were not interested in supporting the edition that was, nevertheless, published.

(45) ARChA, D–322, 212–213.



(46) Letter, Rezanov to the Directors of the Russian-American Company, from Novo-Arkhangel'sk, November 6, 1805.-In: Tikhmenev 1979, p. 42. The dictionary was sent to the directors in the hope of its immediate publication in Russia but it was never published. It consisted of six parallel columns each containing about 1200 words for six languages (Aleut, Koniag and Chugach varieties of Pacific Yupik, Tlingit, Tanaina, and Eyak) already known to Shelikhov as seen on a linguistic map compiled after his death according to his notes (Efimov 1964, map N 184; see: Krauss 1990, pp. 205–206, 213); see a much shorter list of ninety-seven words in the same six languages to which two more Northern languages of the Athabaskan family (Ahtnan and Kolchan) with German and Russian translations are added: Wrangell 1980, pp. 192–197. The best Russian “map of the native dialects of the Aleutian Islands and the North-Western Coast of America” was created by Captain Verman in 1863: Efimov 1964; Golovin 1979, pp. 132–133 (unfortunately the quality of reproduction is very poor; the original map was made in color). Among the first lists of words and simple phrases in Tlingit and Tanaina (Kinai) with Russian translations one should also mention those published posthumously in 1810 at the end of a travel book by G. I. Davydov (1784–1809), Davydov 1977, pp. 235–249. On the history of the study of Native American Indian languages in Russia see also: Blomkvist 1975. The main unpublished text in the Russian archives seems to be a large Tlingit vocabulary file consisting of 8,000 cards composed in 1861–1862 by a specialist in the American native languages, Leopold Radlov (1818–1865), who was assisted in his work by a Tlingit Indian Tenkhentin (Tikhontin) who visited St. Petersburg in 1861 and by the former director of the magnetic observatory in Sitka V. A. von Middendorf (1826–1868), who had studied Tlingit for several years, cf. Pierce 1990, pp. 357 and 416; Krauss 1990, p. 211.

(47) See his special letter of February 16, 1844, To the Novoarkhangel'sk Ecclesiastical Consistory from Innokentii, Bishop of Kamchatka, Kurile and Aleutian Islands, ARChA, D88, 90, Unalaska-Instructions, ecclesiastical-Veniaminov-On recordkeeping.

(48) From this point of view one should note a letter containing a critique of the Orthodox Church for not using enough English. In the letter a search for an English teacher is described: ARChA, D346, 226, Sitka-Education-Management-Tlingit Indian School-need English Teacher. As an example of a school at the end of the century where four languages (a native one, English, Russian, and Church Slavonic) are taught one may study the Nushagak School Journal where the activities of the individual children participating in language classes such as memorizing prayers and practicing church singing, are described: School Journal, given by the Alaska Ecclesiastical Consistory to the Parochial school of Nushagak Sts. Peter and Paul Church, entry of April 16, 1896, ARChA, D191, 138, Nushagak-Education-School Journal.

(49) Journal of the Russian School [in Sitka] for 1892–1893, ARChA, D331, 217, Sitka-Education-School Records-Class Journal-1892–1893.

(50) Program of Studies in Sitka Dormitories [and the Tlingit School] by Vladimir Donskoi, ARChA, D346, 226, Sitka-Education-Management-Tlingit Indian School-1890–1895.

(51) As the resources were restricted one had to become thrifty: leftovers were offered for supper: Menu for children resident at the Sitka Dormitories for the week 12 to 18 October 1897, D346, 226, Sitka-Education-Management-School Menu-1894–1904.



(52) ARChA, D346, 226, Sitka-Education-School opening in Novo-Arkhangel'sk-1841-1842. According to the document twenty-one native and Creole boys were to be selected by the governor's orders.

(53) To Alaska Ecclesiastical Consistory a Report from Rev. Moisei Salamatov of Belkofski Resurrection Church, February 1883, D185, 135-136, Belkofski-Record Journal-1883-1893-Outgoing reports-Salamatov, Moisei L.

(54) ARChA, D 341, 223, Sitka-Education-Books-Psalm Book (handcopied)-eighteenth century.

(55) ARChA, 56, 60, Unalaska-Education-School Records-classroom-1840-1844.

(56) ARChA, D56, 72.

(57) ARChA, D35, 60.

(58) Unfortunately the text of this sentence is half omitted and distorted in the translation: Fedorova 1973, p. 246.

(59) The problem of giving education to girls was also solved in some schools (for example, for Tlingits). Still, in most documents boys are mentioned among the students.

(60) In a statistical chart of January, 1, 1844, 249 literate Aleuts are described in twenty-four villages in the Fox Islands. Record of Fox Aleuts who are able to read books, compilation by Reverend Grigorii Golovin, ARChA, D 30, 58. The whole population of twenty-five villages was 1484 in 1834 (Veniaminov 1840, II, pp. 202, 203; Liapunova 1987a, p. 108, see p. 117 on the dynamics of the population of the Fox Islands). Thus the percentage of the literate people is close to 16 percent which is approximately the number given by Veniaminov. To have a more realistic picture of the proportion of illiterate to literate people one should study those documents in the archives where natives sign their name with marks (usually a cross) not being able to spell it (as is the case in many lists of converted natives, especially Tlingits). For the Aleut population of the beginning of the twentieth century (when the whole system of education began to deteriorate) one may cite the example of a widow who signed her name with a cross since she was illiterate to have her child sent to the orphanage if she should die: ARChA, D 68, 78, Unalaska-Education-Students-Children from Home.

(61) A catechism was translated into Iakut as early in the beginning of the nineteenth century, but the quality of the translation and of the printing was poor, see critical remarks about the second edition of 1821 in: Boehtlingk 1989, pp. 55-56.

(62) During Christmas holidays children sang songs in Russian and Tlingit: Semi-annual account on the progress of the Indian Grammar School, January 8, 1899, by Rev. Iakov Kapanadze, teacher's assistant and housekeeper (ekonom) of the orphanage, ARChA, D 331, 217, Sitka-Education-School Records-Tlingit Indian School-1898.

(63) To His Eminence, Vladimir, Bishop of Aleut and Alaska, from the parish of St. Michael the Archangel Church, December 30, 1888, p. 1, ARChA, D 327, 215-216, Sitka-Buildings-Property-Tlingit Indian School-1888.



(64) Veniaminov had in mind the description of the massacre: Davydov 1977, p. 188. The Vice-Admiral G. A. Sarychev's travel book was first published in 1802: Sarychev 1952.

(65) For example, in the census taken on Mednyi Island three out of twelve families were Creoles whereas three out of thirty-six families were Aleuts. All have Christian names: To the Novo-Arkhangel'sk Ecclesiastical consistory: a census of Mednyi Island for 1866 to 1 January 1867, ARChA, D 28.

(66) To your Reverence, Provost of the American Churches and Missions, and Rector of the Novoarkhangel'sk Cathedral Seminary the very Rev. and Cavalier Petr Stefanovich Litvintov, from the Atka St. Nicholas Church, the Rev. Lavrentii Salmatov, confidential letter, pp. 1–2, 1850, ARChA, D30, 58, Attu-Matrimonial-import of brides-1855. In another document on the same topic it is explained that as all islands in the diocese are distant from one another and there are so few people on each island priests are needed to help to arrange marriages. Marriages are necessary to give stability to society. Of course the wish to avoid inter-marriages played an important part in the demands of the natives that the priests counsel marriage duties and look for brides on the other islands: To the most sacred governing Synod, Report, by V. Serebrennikov, ARChA, D39, 62–63, Atka Island-Matrimony regulations-Difficulties with the Aleut marriages.

(67) See above, n. 7.

(68) For example, see discussion of the difficulty of finding a good interpreter to help the priest for church and school use: To the Northern American Ecclesiastical Consistory from the priest of the Juneau mission, a report. February 14, 1903, ARChA, D 308, 206. Cf. the remarks of Fr. Petr Orlov about the need to have an assistant helping to prepare prayers in the native language that Orlov himself does not know: ARChA, D 242, 168–169, St. Michael-Icogmiut-Kolmakov-Orlov, Petr Grigoriev, 1901–1902.

(69) To His Eminence, the most Reverend Nikolai, Bishop of Aleut and Alaska, from the former pastor of Nushagak Sts. Peter and Paul missionary church Rev. Vladimir Modestov, a request, pp. 1,2, ARChA, D 191, 138.

(70) In his rules of conduct for priests where he insists on the completely free nature of conversion Veniaminov gives the example of Christ and the Apostles: Instructions for any priest who is appointed for the conversion of the unbelievers and in charge of those converted, ARChA, D330, 217, Sitka-Conversion Regulations-Veniaminov (written in 1840; a copy was made by Alexander Arkhangel'skii in 1894, evidently in connection with the celebration of the centenary of the Alaskan Church).

(71) Emperor Alexander II's words were quoted in the text of a decree: Decree of His Imperial Majesty, Autocrat of Russia, to Bishop of Novoarkhangel'sk and Vicar of Kamchatka, April 6, 1859. ARChA, D330, 217, Sitka-Conversion regulations-Government request of increase in converts. The influence of the Russian government on the life of the clergy is seen in the later documents relating to the travels such as the passport (written in Russian, German, and French) issued by the Russian Emperor Alexander III on September 27, 1893, to the Rev. Tikhon Shalamov, allowing passage for him and his wife from Russia to his parish,



the Kodiak Resurrection Church: Printed and inscribed passport. By the grace of God, We Alexander the Third, Emperor and Autocrat of all Russia, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, ARChA, B 30, 27.

(72) To the Most Sacred Governing Synod from Innokentii, Bishop of Kamchatka, June 22, 1852, ARChA, D 328, 216, Sitka-Clergy Dossier-Netsvetov.

(73) To His Eminence, my gracious archpastor and father! ARChA, B6, 47. Partly comparable is an interesting document in which the natives of Kwikpak ask for a priest to be sent to them. The text gives their own words in Central Alaskan Yupik: ARChA, D221, 152-153, St. Michael-Diocese Administration-1884.

(74) ARChA, D264, 182, Kenai Peninsula-Conversion Report-Shamanism-1883, pp. 18-19.

(75) To his Eminence, the most reverend Tikhon, Bishop of Aleut and North America, from the St. Michael's Redoubt missionary priest Petr Orlov, a respectful report, September 21, 1902, ARChA, D 242, 168-169.

(76) Journal of the monk Amfilokhii, priest of the Holy Cross Church in Ikogmiut, pp. 46-47, ARChA, D242, 168-169.

(77) The fact is mentioned in the decree prohibiting the custom: Decree of His Imperial Majesty, the Autocrat of All Russia, to the Irkutsk Ecclesiastical Consistory and priest and clergy of Unalaska, February 1839, ARChA, D 330, 217, Sitka-Conversion Regulations-Tlingit-slave killing custom, 1839.

(78) Journal of the priest Lavrentii Salamatov from June 1862 to September 1863, pp. 19-20, ARChA, D45, 65-66.

(79) Miracle with the mad Stefan in Ingrinak (Ingahamiut), 1847-1848, Decree of His Imperial Majesty, the Autocrat of All Russia, addressed to the Novoarkhangel'sk Ecclesiastical Consistory, pp. 1, 4, ARChA, D242, 168-169.

(80) ARChA, D308, 206, Southeast-Juneau-Diocese administration-conversion report-1902.

(81) See above. A special problem is the struggle of the Church against the suicide widely spread among some (not all) native tribes. It begins already in the middle of the nineteenth century when a special decree is issued explaining what the Church dictates about suicide. The priest is ordered to explain to the people that they are not to commit suicide because they are Christians: Decree of His Imperial Majesty, Autocrat of All Russia from the Novo-Arkhangelsk Ecclesiastical Consistory to the priest of Nushagak Sts. Peter and Paul Church Il'ia Petelin, December 5, 1844, pp. 2-3. ARChA, D202, Nushagak-Instructions, ecclesiastical-burial of suicide.

(82) Journal of the monk Amfilokhii (see above, n. 76), p. 54.

(83) ARChA, D 341, 223, Sitka-Education Books-"Ukazanie puti" by Veniaminov, Sale of, 1842-1843; Report from the Ecclesiastical Consistory on books, donations, etc., p. 2, ARChA, D45, 65-66, Atka-Financial Report-Clergy salary-1842-1866 (on the amount of



rubles for Aleut books sold in 1843 and 1844). See also a letter with Veniaminov's own signature; fifteen years later he bought three books on his own account: To the Novo-Arkhangel'sk Consistory: prescription, ARChA, D341,223, Sitka-Education Books-Veniaminov, request for books in native languages.

(84) To the Alaskan Ecclesiastical Consistory from the pastor of the Sitka St. Michael the Archangel Cathedral, ARChA, D339, 222, Sitka-Education-Books-1880 (a letter by Mitropolski). Twenty years earlier many Aleut books were available according to the inventories of the churches and school libraries; see, for example, on eighteen copies of the Aleut gospels and four Aleut catechisms: ARChA, D202, 143, Nushagak-Inventories-St. Peter & Paul Church-1862-1868.

(85) ARChA, D 339, 222, Sitka-Education-Books-1898.

(86) To His Eminence, Innokentii, the Bishop of Alaska from the priest of the Kwikpak Mission, August 5, 1905. ARChA, D221, 152-153, St. Michael-Diocese Administration-financial situation-1905.

(87) I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the colleagues at the Library of Congress who helped me in my work with the archives of the Russian Orthodox Church of Alaska. Particularly important for me was the opportunity to enjoy the pleasure of everyday discussions and joint research with Vera W. De Buchananne and Andrew J. Cosentino. Without their help and advice the work would not have been completed. ☺



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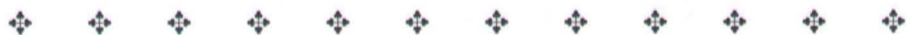
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About the Author

Vyacheslav Ivanov is a major figure in the intellectual world of the twentieth century and has been a major actor in the life of the mind in Eastern Europe for several decades. His work includes fundamental contributions to fields as diverse as Indo-European linguistics, ethnology, neurolinguistics, literary criticism, and semiotics.

Professor Ivanov can read several hundred languages, ranging from Navaho to the indigenous languages of Siberian tribes. Among his most important contributions is the glottalic theory of the proto Indo-European language (*The Indo-European Language and the Indo-Europeans*, 1984), a fundamental reinterpretation of proto Indo-European phonology that yields a novel new interpretation of the place of origin and migrational patterns of the early Indo-Europeans.

As an active member of the Soviet parliament, Professor Ivanov represented the liberal Moscow intellectuals who previously looked to the late Andrei Sakharov for leadership. As a former director of the Library of Foreign Literature in Moscow (1989–1993), he promoted in Russia the central role that libraries and open access to information play in democratic societies.

In recent years, Professor Ivanov has been a visiting professor at Stanford University and currently is at the University of California, Los Angeles, in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. ∞

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